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DIARY
OF
A LATE PHYSICIAN.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

PASSAGES

FROM THE

DIARY OF A LATE PHYSICIAN.

BY

SAMUEL WARREN, F.R.S.

“What is nearest us, touches us most. The passions rise higher at domestic than at imperial tragedies.”—DR JOHNSON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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DIARY

OF

A LATE PHYSICIAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPECTRE-SMITTEN.

FEW topics of medical literature have occasioned more wide and contradictory speculation than that of insanity, with reference, as well to its predisposing and immediate causes, as its best method of treatment. Since experience is the only substratum of real knowledge, the easiest and surest way of arriving at those general principles which may regulate both our pathological and therapeutical researches, especially concerning the subtle, almost inscrutable disorder, *mania*—is, when one does meet with some striking, well marked case, to watch it closely throughout, and be particularly anxious to seize on all those smaller features—those more transient indications, which are truer characteristics of the complaint than perhaps any other. With this object, did I pay close attention to the very singular and affecting case detailed in the following narrative. I have not given the *whole*

of my observations—far from it; those only are recorded which seemed to me to have some claims to the consideration of both medical and general readers.—The apparent eccentricity of the title will be found accounted for in the course of the narrative.

Mr M——, as one of a very large party, had been enjoying the splendid hospitality of Lady ——, and did not leave till a late, or rather early hour in the morning. Pretty women, music, and champagne, had almost turned his head; and it was rather fortunate for him that a hackney-coach stand was within a stone's throw of the house he was leaving. Muffling his cloak closely around him, he contrived to move towards it in a tolerably direct line, and a few moments' time beheld him driving, at the usual snail's pace of those rickety vehicles, to Lincoln's Inn; for Mr M—— was a law student. In spite of the transient exhilaration produced by the scenes he had just quitted, and the excitement consequent on the prominent share he took in an animated, though accidental discussion, in the presence of about thirty of the most elegant women that could well be brought together, he found himself becoming the subject of a most unaccountable depression of spirits. Even while at Lady ——'s, he had latterly perceived himself talking often for mere talking's sake—the chain of his thoughts perpetually broken—and an impatience and irritability of manner towards those whom he addressed, which he readily resolved, however, into the reaction following high excitement. M——, I ought before, perhaps, to have mentioned, was a man of great talent, chiefly, however, imaginative; and had that evening been particularly brilliant on his favourite topic—*diablerie* and mysticism;

towards which he generally contrived to incline every conversation in which he bore a part. He had been dilating, in particular, on the power possessed by Mr Maturin of exciting the most fearful and horrific ideas in the minds of his readers, instancing a particular passage of one of his romances—the title of which I have forgotten—where the fiend suddenly presents himself to his appalled victim, amidst the silence and gloom of his prison-cell. Long before he had reached home, the fumes of wine had evaporated, and the influence of excitement subsided ; and, with reference to intoxication, he was as sober and calm as ever he was in his life. *Why* he knew not, but his heart seemed to grow heavier and heavier, and his thoughts gloomier, every step by which he neared Lincoln's Inn. It struck three o'clock as he entered the sombrous portals of the ancient inn of court. The perfect silence—the moonlight shining sadly on the dusky buildings—the cold quivering stars—all these together, combined to enhance his nervousness. He described it to me as though things seemed to wear a strange, spectral, supernatural aspect. Not a watchman of the inn was heard crying the hour—not a porter moving—no living being but himself visible in the large square he was crossing. As he neared his staircase, he perceived his heart fluttering ; in short, he felt under some strange unaccountable influence, which, had he reflected a little, he would have discovered to arise merely from an excitable nervous temperament, operating on an imagination peculiarly attuned to sympathies with terror. His chambers lay on the third floor of the staircase ; and, on reaching it, he found his door-lamp glimmering with its last expiring ray. He opened his door, and, after groping

some time in the dark of his sitting-room, found his chamber candlestick. In attempting to light his candle, he put out the lamp. He went down stairs, but found that the lamp of every landing had shared the fate of his own; so he returned, rather irritated, thinking to amerce the porter of his customary Christmas-box, for his niggard supply of oil. After some time spent in the search, he discovered his tinder-box, and proceeded to strike a light. This was not the work of a moment. And where is the bachelor to whom it is? The potent spark, however, dropped at last into the very centre of the soft tinder. M—— blew—it caught—spread—the match quickly kindled, and he lighted his candle. He took it in his hand, and was making for bed, when his eyes caught a glimpse of an object which brought him senseless to the floor. The furniture of his room was disposed as when he had left it; for his laundress had neglected to come and put things in order: the table with a few books on it, was drawn towards the fire-place, and by its side stood the ample-cushioned easy-chair. The first object visible, with sudden distinctness, was a figure sitting in the arm-chair. It was that of a gentleman dressed in dark-coloured clothes, his hands, white as alabaster, closed together over his lap, and the face looking away; but it turned slowly towards M——, revealing to him a countenance of a ghastly hue—the features glowing like steel heated to a white heat, and the two eyes turned full towards him, and blazing—absolutely blazing, he described it—with a most horrible lustre. The appalling spectre, while M——’s eyes were riveted upon it, though glazing fast with fright, slowly rose from its seat, stretched out both its arms, and

seemed approaching him, when he fell down senseless on the floor, as if smitten with apoplexy. He recollected nothing more, till he found himself, about the middle of the next day, in bed, his laundress, myself, an apothecary, and several others, standing round him. His situation was not discovered till more than an hour after he had fallen, as nearly as could be subsequently ascertained, nor would it then, but for a truly fortunate accident. He had neglected to close either of his outer-doors (I believe it is usual for chambers in the inns of court to have double outer-doors), and an old woman, who happened to be leaving the adjoining set, about five o'clock, on seeing Mr M——'s doors both open, at such an untimely hour, was induced, by feelings of curiosity and alarm, to return to the rooms she had left, for a light, with which she entered his chambers, after having repeatedly called his name without receiving any answer. What will it be supposed had been her occupation at such an early hour in the adjoining chambers?—Laying out the corpse of their occupant, a Mr T——, who had expired about eight o'clock the preceding evening!

Mr M—— had known him, though not very intimately: and there were some painful circumstances attending his death, which, even though on no other grounds than mere sympathy, M—— had laid much to heart. In addition to this, he had been observed by his friends as being latterly the subject of very high excitement, owing to the successful prosecution of an affair of great interest and importance.* We all accounted for his present situation, by referring it to some apoplectic seizure; for we were, of course, ignorant of the real

* An extensive literary undertaking.

occasion, fright, which I did not learn till long afterwards. The laundress told me, that she found Mr M——, to her great terror, stretched motionless along the floor, in his cloak and full dress, and with a candlestick lying beside him. She, at first, supposed him intoxicated ; but, on finding all her efforts to rouse him unsuccessful, and seeing his fixed features and rigid frame, she hastily summoned to her assistance a fellow-laundress, whom she had left in charge of the corpse next door, undressed him, and laid him on the bed. A neighbouring medical man was then called in, who pronounced it to be a case of epilepsy ; and he was sufficiently warranted by the appearance of a little froth about the lips, prolonged stupor, resembling sleep, and frequent convulsions of the most violent kind. The remedies resorted to produced no alleviation of the symptoms ; and matters continued to wear such a threatening and alarming aspect, that I was summoned in by his brother, and was at his bedside by two o'clock. His countenance was dark and highly intellectual : its lineaments were, naturally, full of power and energy ; but *now*, overclouded with an expression of trouble and horror. He was seized with a dreadful fit soon after I had entered the room. Oh ! it is a piteous and shocking spectacle to see the human frame subjected to such demoniacal twitchings and contortions, which are so sudden, so irresistible, as to suggest the idea of some vague, terrible, exciting cause, which cannot be discovered : as though the sufferer lay passive in the grasp of some messenger of darkness “ *sent to buffet him.*”*

* The popular etymology of the word *epilepsy*, sanctioned by several reputable class-books of the profession, which are now lying before

M—— was a very powerful man ; and, during the fits, it was next to impossible for all present, united, to control his movements. The foam at his mouth suggested to his terrified brother the harrowing suspicion that the case was one of hydrophobia. None of my remonstrances or assurances to the contrary sufficed to quiet him, and his distress added to the confusion of the scene. After prescribing to the best of my ability, I left, considering the case to be one of simple epilepsy. During the rest of the day and night, the fits abated both in violence and frequency ; but he was left in a state of the utmost exhaustion, from which, however, he seemed to be rapidly recovering during the space of the four succeeding days ; when I was suddenly summoned

me—i.e. ἐπιλειψις is erroneous, and, more—nonsensical. For the information of *general* readers, I may state, that its true derivation is from λαμβάνω, through its Ionic obsolete form, λήβω : whence ἐπιληψις—a seizing, a holding fast. Therefore we speak of an ATTACK of epilepsy. This etymology is highly descriptive of the disease in question ; for the sudden prostration, rigidity, contortions, &c. of the patient, strongly suggest the idea that he has been *taken* or *seized* (ἐπιληφθεὶς), by, as it were, some external invisible agent. It is worthy of notice, by the way, that ἐπιληπτικός is used by ecclesiastical writers to denote a person *possessed by a demon*.—Ἐπιλειψις, signifies simply “ failure, deficiency.” I shall conclude this note with a practical illustration of the necessity which calls it forth—the correction of a prevalent error. A flippant student, who, I was given to understand, plumed himself much among his companions on his Greek, was suddenly asked by one of his examiners for a definition of *epilepsy*, grounded on its etymology. I forget the definition, which was given with infinite self-sufficiency of tone and manner ; but the fine touch of scholarship with which it was finished off, I well recollect :—“ From ἐπιλειψις—(ἐπί-λειπω—I fail, am wanting ;) therefore, sir, epilepsy is a *failure of animal functions* !”—The same sage definition is regularly given by a well-known metropolitan lecturer !

to his bedside, which I had left only two hours before, with the intelligence that he had disclosed symptoms of more alarming illness than ever. I hurried to his chambers, and found that the danger had not been magnified. One of his friends met me on the staircase, and told me that, about half an hour before, while he and Mr C—— M——, the patient's brother, were sitting beside him, he suddenly turned to the latter, and enquired, in a tone full of apprehension and terror—"Is Mr T—— dead?"

"Oh, dear! yes—he died several days ago," was the reply.

"Then it was he"—he gasped—"it was HE whom I saw, and he is surely—*damned*!—Yes, merciful Maker!—he is—he is!"—he continued, elevating his voice to a perfect roar—"and the flames have reduced his face to ashes!—Horror! horror! horror!" He then shut his eyes, and relapsed into silence for about ten minutes, when he exclaimed—"Hark you, there—secure me! tie me! make me fast, or I shall burst upon you and destroy you all—for I am going mad—I feel it!" He ceased, and commenced breathing fast and heavily, his chest heaving as if under the pressure of enormous weight, and his swelling, quivering features evidencing the dreadful uproar within. Presently he began to grind his teeth, and his expanding eyes glared about him in all directions, as though following the motions of some frightful object, and he muttered fiercely through his closed teeth—"Oh! save me from him—save me—save me!"

It was a fearful thing to see him lying in such a state—grinding his teeth as if he would crush them to powder—his livid lips crested with foam—his features

swollen, writhing, blackening ; and, which gave his face a peculiarly horrible and fiendish expression, his eyes distorted, or inverted upwards, so that nothing but the glaring whites of them could be seen—his whole frame rigid—and his hands clenched, as though they would never open again ! It is a dreadful tax on one's nerves to have to encounter such objects, familiar though medical men are with such and similar spectacles ; and, in the present instance, every one round the bedside of the unfortunate patient, stood trembling with pale and momentarily averted faces. The ghastly, fixed, upturning of the eyes in epileptic patients, fills me with horror whenever I recall their image to my mind !

The return of these epileptic fits, in such violence, and after such an interval, alarmed me with apprehensions, lest, as is not unfrequently the case, apoplexy should supervene, or even ultimate insanity. It was rather singular that M—— was never known to have had an epileptic fit, previous to the present seizure, and he was then in his twenty-fifth year. I was conjecturing what sudden fright or blow, or accident of any kind, or congestion of the vessels of the brain, from frequent inebriation, could have brought on the present fit, when my patient, whose features had gradually sunk again into their natural disposition, gave a sigh of exhaustion—the perspiration burst forth, and he murmured—some time before we could distinctly catch the words—“ Oh ! spectre-smitten ! spectre-smitten ! ”—(which expression I have adopted as the title of this paper)—“ I shall never recover again ! ” Though sufficiently surprised, and perplexed about the import of the words, we took no notice of them ; but endeavoured to divert his thoughts from

the fantasy, if such there were, which seemed to possess them, by enquiring into the nature of his symptoms. He disregarded us, however; feebly grasped my hand in his clammy fingers, and, looking at me languidly, muttered—"What—oh, what brought the *fiend* into *my* chambers?"—and I felt his whole frame pervaded by a cold shiver—"Poor T——! Horrid fate!" On hearing him mention T——'s name, we all looked simultaneously at one another, but without speaking; for a suspicion crossed our minds, that his highly-wrought feelings, acting on a strong imagination, always tainted with superstitious terrors, had conjured up some hideous object, which had scared him nearly to madness—probably some fancied apparition of his deceased neighbour. He began again to utter long deep-drawn groans, that gradually gave place to the heavy stertorous breathing, which, with other symptoms—his pulse, for instance, beating about 115 a-minute—confirmed me in the opinion that he was suffering from a very severe congestion of the vessels of the brain. I directed copious venesection*—his head to be shaven and covered perpetually with cloths soaked in evaporating lotions—blisters behind his ears, and at the nape of the neck—and appropriate internal medicines. I then left him, apprehending the worst consequences: for I had once before a similar case under my care—one in which a young lady was, which I strongly suspected to be the case with M——, absolutely frightened to death, and went through nearly the same round of symptoms, as those which were beginning to make their appearance

* For using this word, and one above, "stertorous," a weekly work accuses the writer of PEDANTRY!

in my present patient—a sudden epileptic seizure, terminating in outrageous madness, which destroyed both the physical and intellectual energies; and the young lady expired. I may possibly hereafter prepare for publication some of my notes of *her* case, which had some very remarkable features.*

* Through want of time and room, I am compelled to condense my memoranda of the case alluded to into a note. The circumstances occurred in the year 1813. The Hon. Miss —— was a young woman about eighteen or twenty years of age; and being of a highly fanciful turn, betook herself to congenial literature, in the shape of novels and romances, especially those which dealt with “unearthlies.” They pushed out of her head all ideas of *real* life; for morning, noon, and night, beheld her bent over the pages of some absorbing tale or other, to the exclusion of all other kinds of reading. The natural consequence of all this was, that she became one of the most fanciful and timorous creatures breathing. She had worked herself up to such a morbid pitch of sensitiveness and apprehension, that she dared hardly be alone even during the day; and as for night-time she had a couple of candles always burning in her bedroom, and her maid sleeping with her on a side-bed.

One night, about twelve o’clock, Miss —— and her maid retired to bed, the former absorbed and lost in the scenes of a petrifying romance she had finished reading only an hour before. Her maid had occasion to go down stairs again for the purpose of fetching up some curling papers; and she had scarcely reached the lower landing on her return, before she heard a faint scream proceed from her young mistress’s chamber. On hurrying back, the servant beheld Miss —— stretched senseless on the floor, with both hands pressed upon her eyes. She instantly roused the whole family; but their efforts were unavailing. Miss —— was in a fit of epilepsy, and medical assistance was called in. I was one of the first that was summoned. For two days she lay in a state closely resembling that of Mr M—— in the text; but in about a week’s time she recovered consciousness, and was able to converse calmly and connectedly. She told me that she had been *frightened* into the fit: that a few moments after the maid had left her, on the night alluded to, she sat down before her dressing-glass, which had two candles, in branches from each side of it. She was hardly seated, before a “strange sensation seized her,”—to use her own words. She felt cold and nervous. The bedroom was both

The next morning, about eleven, saw me again at Mr M——'s chambers, where I found three or four members of his family—two of them his married sisters—seated round his sitting-room fire, in melancholy silence. Mr ——, the apothecary, had just left, but was expected to return every moment, to meet me in consultation.

spacious and gloomy ; and she did not relish the idea of being left alone in it. She rose and went towards the bed for her nightcap : and, on pushing aside the heavy damask curtains, she heard a rustling noise on the opposite side of the bed, as if some one had hastily leaped off. She trembled, and her heart beat hard. She resumed her seat, however, with returning self-possession, on hearing the approaching footsteps of her maid. On suddenly directing her eyes towards the glass, they met the dim outline of a figure standing close behind her with frightful features, and a pendant plume, of a faint fiery hue ! The rest has been told. Her mind, however, long weakened, and her physical energies disordered, had received too severe a shock to recover from it quickly. A day or two after Miss —— had told me the above, she suffered a sudden and most unexpected relapse. Oh, that merciless, and fiendish EPILEPSY !—how it tossed about those tender limbs !—how it distorted and convulsed those fair and handsome features ! To see the mild eye of beauty subjected to the horrible up-turned glare described above, and the slender fingers black and clenched—the froth bubbling on the lips—the grinding of the teeth !—would it not shock and wring the heart of the beholder ? It did *mine*, accustomed as I am to such spectacles.

Insanity, at length, made its appearance, and locked its hapless victim in its embraces for nearly a year. She was removed to a private asylum ; and for *six weeks* was chained by a staple to the wall of her bedroom, in addition to enduring a strait waistcoat. On one occasion I saw her in one of her most frantic moods. She *curled* and *swore* in the most diabolical manner, and yelled, and laughed, and chattered her teeth, and spit ! The beautiful hair had been shaved off, and was then scarce half-an-inch long, so that she hardly looked like a female about the head. The eyes, too, were surrounded by dark *areolæ*, and her mouth disfigured by her swollen tongue and lips, which she had severely bitten. She motioned me to draw near her, when she had become a little more tranquil, and I thoughtlessly acceded. When I was within a foot of her, she made a sudden and desperate plunge towards me, motioning with her lips as though

My patient lay alone in his bedroom, asleep, and apparently better than he had been since his first seizure. He had experienced only one slight fit during the night ; and though he had been a little delirious in the earlier part of the evening, he had been, on the whole, so calm and quiet, that his friends' apprehensions of insanity were beginning to subside ; so he was left, as I said, *alone* ; for the nurse, just before my arrival, had left her seat by his bedside for a few moments, thinking him "in a comfortable and easy nap," and was engaged, in a low whisper, conversing with the members of M——'s family, who were in the sitting-room. Hearing such a report of my patient, I sat down quietly among his relatives, determining not to disturb him, at least till the arrival of the apothecary. Thus were we engaged, questioning the nurse in an under tone, when a loud laugh from the bedroom suddenly silenced our whisperings, and turned us all pale. We started to our feet with blank amazement in each countenance, scarcely crediting the evidence of our senses. Could it be M—— ? It *must*, there was none else in the room. What, then, was he laughing about ?

While we were standing silently gazing on one

she would have torn me, like a tigress its prey ! I thank God that her hands were handcuffed behind her, or I must have suffered severely. She once bit off the little finger of one of the nurses who was feeding her !

* * * * *

When she was sufficiently recovered to be removed from —— House, she was taken to the south of France by my directions. She was in a very shattered state of health, and survived her removal no more than three months.

Who can deny that this poor girl fell a victim to the pestilent effects of romance reading ?

another, with much agitation, the laugh was repeated, but longer and louder than before, accompanied with the sound of footsteps, now crossing the room—then, as if of one jumping! The ladies turned paler than before, and seemed scarcely able to stand. They sank again into their chairs, gasping with terror. “Go in, nurse, and see what’s the matter,” said I, standing by the side of the younger of the ladies, whom I expected every instant to fall into my arms in a swoon.

“Doctor!—go in?—I—I—I dare not!” stammered the nurse, pale as ashes, and trembling violently.

“Do you come *here*, then, and attend to Mrs ——,” said I, “and I will go in.” The nurse staggered to my place, in a state not far removed from that of the lady whom she was called to attend; for a third laugh—long, loud, uproarious—had burst from the room while I was speaking. After cautioning the ladies and the nurse to observe profound silence, and not to attempt following me till I sent for them, I stepped noiselessly to the bedroom door, and opened it slowly and softly, not to alarm him. All was silent within; but the first object that presented itself, when I saw fairly into the room, can never be effaced from my mind to the day of my death. Mr M—— had got out of bed,* pulled off his shirt, and stepped to the dressing-table, where he stood stark naked before the glass, with a razor in his right hand, with which

* Since this was published, I have been favoured, by Sir Henry Hallford, with the sight of a narrative of a case remarkably similar to the present one, but told, I need hardly say, with far more graphic ability. I hope—nay, I believe—it will shortly be published by the learned and accomplished Baronet. [It has—in the “Essays and Orations read and delivered at the Royal College of Physicians,” &c. &c. since published.—Note to the Third Edition.]

he had just finished shaving off his eyebrows ; and he was eyeing himself steadfastly in the glass, holding the razor elevated above his head. On seeing the door open, and my face peering at him, he turned full towards me (the grotesque aspect of his countenance, denuded of so prominent a feature as the eyebrows, and his head completely shaved, and the wildfire of madness flashing from his staring eyes, exciting the most frightful ideas), brandishing the razor over his head with an air of triumph, and shouting nearly at the top of his voice—“ Ah, ha, ha !—What do you think of this ? ”

Merciful Heaven ! may I never be placed again in such perilous circumstances, nor have my mind overwhelmed with such a gush of horror as burst over it at that moment ! What was I to do ? Obeying a sudden impulse, I had entered the room, shutting the door after me ; and, should any one in the sitting-room suddenly attempt to open it again, or make a noise or disturbance of any kind, by giving vent to their emotions, what was to become of the madman or ourselves ? He might, in an instant, almost sever his head from his shoulders, or burst upon me or his sisters, and do us some deadly mischief ! I felt conscious that the lives of all of us depended on my conduct ; and I devoutly thank God for the measure of tolerable self-possession which was vouchsafed to me at that dreadful moment. I continued standing like a statue—motionless and silent—endeavouring to fix my eye on him, that I might gain the command of *his* ; *that* successful, I had some hopes of being able to deal with him. He, in turn, now stood speechless, and I thought he was quailing—that I had overmastered him—when I was suddenly fit to faint with despair, for at that

awful instant I heard the door-handle tried—the door pushed gently open—and saw the nurse, I supposed, or one of the ladies peeping through it. The maniac also heard it—the spell was broken—and, in a frenzy, he leaped several times successively in the air, brandishing the razor over his head as before.

While he was in the midst of these feats, I turned my head hurriedly to the person who had so cruelly disobeyed my orders, thereby endangering my life—and whispered in low affrighted accents—“At the peril of your lives—of mine—shut the door—away, away—hush! or we are all murdered!” I was obeyed—the intruder withdrew, and I heard a sound as if she had fallen to the floor—probably in a swoon. Fortunately the madman was so occupied with his antics, that he did not observe what had passed at the door. It was the nurse who made the attempt to discover what was going on, I afterwards learnt—but unsuccessfully, for she had seen nothing. My injunctions were obeyed to the letter, for they maintained a profound silence, unbroken, but by a faint sighing sound, which I should not have heard, but that my ears were painfully sensitive to the slightest noise. To return, however, to myself, and my fearful chamber companion.

“Mighty talisman!” he exclaimed, holding the razor before him, and gazing earnestly at it, “how utterly unworthy—how infamous the common use men put thee to!” Still he continued standing, with his eyes fixed intently upon the deadly weapon—I all the while uttering not a sound, nor moving a muscle, but waiting for our eyes to meet once more.

“Ha! Doctor ——!—how easily I keep you at bay,

though little my weapon—*thus*”—he exclaimed gaily, at the same time assuming one of the postures of the broadsword exercise—but I observed that he *cautiously avoided meeting my eye again*. I crossed my arms submissively on my breast, and continued in perfect silence, endeavouring, but in vain, to catch a glance of his eye. I did not wish to excite any emotion in him, except such as might have a tendency to calm, pacify, disarm him. Seeing me stand thus, and manifesting no disposition to meddle with him, he raised his left hand to his face, and rubbed his fingers rapidly over the site of his shaved eyebrows. He seemed, I thought, inclined to go over them a second time, when a knock was heard at the outer chamber door, which I instantly recognised as that of Mr——, the apothecary. The madman also heard it, turned suddenly pale, and moved away from the glass opposite which he had been stooping. “Oh—oh!” he groaned, while his features assumed an air of the blankest affright, every muscle quivering, and every limb trembling from head to foot—“Is that—is—that T—— come for ME?” He let fall the razor on the floor, and clasping his hands in an agony of apprehension, he retreated, crouching and cowering down towards the more distant part of the room, where he continued peering round the bed-post, his eyes straining, as though they would start from their sockets, and fixed steadfastly upon the door. I heard him rustling the bed-curtain and shaking it; but very gently, as if wishing to cover and conceal himself within its folds.

O humanity!—Was *that* poor being—that pitiable maniac—was *that* the once gay, gifted, brilliant M——?

To return. My attention was wholly occupied with

one object, the razor on the floor. How I thanked God for the gleam of hope that all might yet be right—that I might succeed in obtaining possession of the deadly weapon, and putting it beyond his reach ! But how was I to do all this ? I stole gradually towards the spot where the razor lay, without removing once my eye from his, nor he his from the dreaded door, intending, as soon as I should have come pretty near it, to make a sudden snatch at the horrid implement of destruction. I did—I succeeded—I got it into my possession, scarcely crediting my senses. I had hardly grasped my prize, when the door opened, and Mr —, the apothecary, entered, sufficiently startled and bewildered, as it may be supposed, with the strange aspect of things.

“ Ha — ha — ha ! It’s *you*, is it — it’s you — you anatomy !—you plaster ! How dare you mock me in this horrid way, eh ? ” shouted the maniac ; and, springing like a lion from his lair, he made for the spot where the confounded apothecary stood, stupified with terror. I verily believe he would have been destroyed, torn to pieces, or cruelly maltreated in some way or other, had I not started and thrown myself between the maniac and the unwitting object of his vengeance, exclaiming at the same time, as a *dernier resort*, a sudden and strong appeal to his fears—“ Remember !—T—— ! T—— ! T—— ! ”

“ I do—I do ! ” stammered the maniac, stepping back, perfectly aghast. He seemed utterly petrified, and sank shivering down again into his former position at the corner of the bed, moaning—“ Oh me ! wretched me ! Away —away—away ! ” I then stepped to Mr —, who had not moved an inch, directed him to retire instantly, conduct all the females out of the chambers, and return as

soon as possible with two or three of the inn-porters, or any other able-bodied men he could procure on the spur of the moment ; and I concluded by slipping the razor, unobservedly, as I thought, into his hands, and bidding him remove it to a place of safety. He obeyed, and I found myself once more alone with the madman.

“ M——! dear Mr M——! I’ve got something to say to you—I have indeed ; it’s very, very particular.” I commenced approaching him slowly, and speaking the softest tones conceivable.

“ But you’ve forgotten THIS, you fool, you ! —you have ! ” he replied fiercely, approaching the dressing-table, and suddenly seizing *another razor*—the fellow of the one I had got hold of with such pains and peril—and which, alas, alas ! had never once caught my eye ! I gave myself up for lost, fully expecting that I should be murdered, when I saw the bloodthirsty spirit with which he clutched it, brandished it over his head, and with a smile of fiendish derision, shook it full before me ! I trembled, however, the next moment, for himself, for he drew it rapidly to and fro before his throat, as though he would give the fatal gash, but did not touch the skin. He gnashed his teeth with a kind of savage satisfaction at the dreadful power with which he was consciously armed.

“ Oh, Mr M—— ! think of your poor mother and sisters ! ” I exclaimed in a sorrowful tone, my voice faltering with uncontrollable agitation. He shook the razor again before me with an air of defiance, and really “ grinned horribly a ghastly smile.”

“ Now, suppose I choose to punish your perfidy, you wretch ! and do what you dread, eh ? ” said he, holding the razor as if he were going to cut his throat.

"Why, wouldn't it be nobler to forgive and forget, Mr M——?" I replied, with tolerable firmness, and folding my arms on my breast, anxious to appear quite at ease.

"Too—too—too, Doctor! —Too—too—too—too! Ha! by the way—what do you say to a *razor hornpipe*—eh?—Ha, ha, ha! a novelty at least!" He began forthwith to dance a few steps, leaping frantically high, and uttering, at intervals, a sudden, shrill, dissonant cry, resembling that used by those who dance the Highland "fling," or some other species of Scottish dance. I affected to admire his dancing, even to ecstasy—clapping my hands, and shouting, "Bravo, bravo! —Encore!" He seemed inclined to go over it again, but was too much exhausted, and sat down panting on the window-seat, which was close behind him.

"You'll catch cold, Mr M——, sitting in that draught of air, naked and perspiring, as you are. Will you put on your clothes?" said I, approaching him.

"No!" he replied, sternly, and extended the razor threateningly. I fell back, of course—not knowing what to do, nor choosing to risk either his destruction or my own by attempting any active interference; for what was to be done with a madman who had an open razor in his hand? —Mr ——, the apothecary, seemed to have been gone an age; and I found even my *temper* beginning to fail me—for I was tired with his tricks, deadly dangerous as they were. My attention, however, was soon riveted again on the motions of the maniac. "Yes—yes, decidedly so—I'm too hot to do it now—I am!" said he, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, and eyeing the razor intently. I must get calm and cool—

and then—*then* for the sacrifice! Aha, the sacrifice!—An offering—expiation—even as Abraham—ha, ha, ha!—But, by the way, how did Abraham do it—that is, how did he intend to have done it?—Ah, I must ask my familiar!”

“A *sacrifice*, Mr M——?—Why, what do you mean?” I enquired, attempting a laugh—I say, *attempting*—for my blood trickled chillily through my veins, and my heart seemed frozen.

“What do I mean, eh? Wretch! Dolt!—What do I mean?—Why, a peace-offering to my Maker, for a badly-spent life, to be sure!—One would think you had never *heard* of such a thing as religion—you savage!”

“I deny that the sacrifice would be accepted; and for two reasons,” I replied, suddenly recollecting that he plumed himself on his casuistry, and hoping to engage him on some new crotchet, which might keep him in play till Mr —— returned with assistance; but I was mistaken!

“Well, well, Doctor ——! let *that* be for the present—I can’t resolve doubts now—no, no,” he replied, solemnly—“’tis a time for action—for action—for action,” he continued, gradually elevating his voice, using vehement gesticulations, and rising from his seat.

“Yes, yes,” said I, warmly; “but though you’ve followed closely enough the advice of the Talmudist, in shaving off your eyebrows, as a preparatory”——

“Aha! aha!—What!—have *you* seen the Talmud!—Have you really?—Well,” he added, after a doubtful pause, “in what do you think I’ve failed, eh?”

I need hardly say, that I myself scarcely knew what led me to utter the nonsense in question; but I have

several times found, in cases of insanity, that suddenly and readily *supplying a motive for the patient's conduct*—referring it to a *cause*, of some sort or other, with steadfast intrepidity—even be the said cause never so preposterously absurd—has been attended with the happiest effects, in arresting the patient's attention—chiming in with his eccentric fancies, and *piquing* his disturbed faculties into *acquiescence* in what he sees coolly taken for granted as quite true—a thing of course—mere matter-of-fact—by the person he is addressing. I have several times recommended this little device to those who have been intrusted with the care of the insane, and have been assured of its success.

“ You are very near the mark, I own ; but it strikes me that you have shaved them off too equally, too uniformly. You ought to have left some little ridges—furrows—hem, hem !—to—to—terminate, or resemble the—the—the *striped stick* which Jacob held up before the ewes ! ”

“ Oh—ay—ay ! Exactly—true ! Strange oversight ! ” he replied, as if struck with the truth of the remark, and yet puzzled by vain attempts to corroborate it by his own recollections ; “ I—I recollect it now—but it isn't too late yet—is it ? ”

“ I think not,” I replied, with apparent hesitation, hardly crediting the success of my strange stratagem. “ To be sure, it will require very great delicacy ; but as you've not shaved them off *very* closely, I think I can manage it,” I continued, doubtfully.

“ Oh, oh, oh ! ” growled the maniac, while his eyes flashed fire at me. “ There's one sitting by me that tells me you are dealing falsely with me—oh, lying villain ! ”

oh, perfidious wretch!" At that moment the door opened gently behind me, and the voice of Mr ——, the apothecary, whispered in a low hurried tone, " Doctor, I've got three of the inn porters here, in the sitting-room." Though the whisper was almost inaudible even to me, when uttered close to my ear, to my utter amazement M—— had heard every syllable of it, and understood it too, as if some officious minion of Satan himself had quickened his ears, or conveyed the intelligence to him.

" Ah, ha, ha!—Ha, ha, ha!—Fools! knaves, harpies!—and what are you and your hired desperadoes to *me*?—Thus—thus do I outwit you—thus!" and, springing from his seat he suddenly drew up the lower part of the window-frame, and looked through it—then at the razor—and again at me, with one of the most awful glances—full of dark diabolical meaning, the momentary suggestion, surely, of the great Tempter—that I ever encountered in my life.

" Which!—which!—which!" he muttered fiercely through his closed teeth, while his right foot rested on the window-seat, ready for him to spring out, and his eye travelled, as before, rapidly from the razor to the window. Can any thing be conceived more palsyng to the beholders? " Why did not you and your strong reinforcement spring at once upon him and overpower him?" possibly some one is asking.—What! and he armed with a *naked razor*? His head might have been severed from his shoulders, before we could have overmastered him—or we might ourselves—at least one of us—have been murdered, or cruelly maimed in the attempt. We knew not *what* to do! M—— suddenly withdrew his head from the window through which he had been gazing, with a

shuddering, horror-stricken emotion, and groaned—"No! no! no! I won't—can't—for there's T—— standing just beneath, his face all blazing, and waiting with outspread arms to catch me," standing, at the same time, shading his eyes with his left hand—when I whispered—"Now, now! go up to him—secure him—all three spring on him at once, and disarm him!" They obeyed me, and were in the act of rushing into the room, when M—— suddenly planted himself into a posture of defiance, elevated the razor to his throat, and almost *howled*—"One step—one step nearer—and I—I—I—so!" motioning as though he would draw it from one ear to the other. We all fell back, horror-struck, and in silence. What could we do? If we moved towards him, or made use of any threatening gestures, we should see the floor in an instant deluged with his blood. I once more crossed my arms on my breast, with an air of mute submission.

"Ha, ha!" he exclaimed, after a pause, evidently pleased with such a demonstration of his power, "obedient, however!—well—that's one merit! But still, what a set of cowards—bullies—you must all be!—What!—all four of you afraid of *one* man?" In the course of his frantic gesticulations, he had drawn the razor so close to his neck, that its edge had slightly grazed the skin under his left ear, and a little blood trickled from it over his shoulders and breast.

"Blood!—*blood*?—What a strange feeling! How coldly it fell on my breast!—How did I do it?—Shall—I—go—on, as I have made a beginning?" he exclaimed, drawling the words at great length. He shuddered, and—to my unutterable joy and astonishment—deliberately closed the razor, replaced it in its case, put both

in the drawer ; and having done all this, before we ventured to approach him, he fell at his full length on the floor, and began to yell in a manner that was perfectly frightful ; but, in a few moments, he burst into tears, and cried and sobbed like a child. We took him up in our arms, he groaning—"Oh ! shorn of my strength!—shorn ! shorn ! like Samson !—Why part with my weapon ?—The Philistines be upon me !"—and laid him down on the bed, where, after a few moments, he fell asleep. When he woke again, a strait waistcoat put all his tremendous strugglings at defiance—though his strength seemed increased in a tenfold degree—and prevented his attempting either his own life or that of any one near him. When he found all his writhings and heavings utterly useless, he gnashed his teeth, the foam issued from his mouth, and he shouted—"I'll be even with you, you incarnate devils !—I will !—I'll suffocate myself !" and he held his breath till he grew black in the face, when he gave over the attempt. It was found necessary to have him strapped down to the bed ; and his howlings were so shocking and loud, that we began to think of removing him, even in that dreadful condition, to a madhouse. I ordered his head to be shaved again, and kept perpetually covered with cloths soaked in evaporating lotions—blisters to be applied behind each ear, and at the nape of the neck—leeches to the temples—and the appropriate internal medicines in such cases ; and left him, begging I might be sent for instantly in the event of his getting worse.* Oh ! I shall never forget this harrowing scene !

* I ought to have mentioned, a little way back, that, in obedience to my hurried injunctions, the ladies suffered themselves, almost fainting with fright, to be conducted silently into the adjoining chambers

—my feelings were wound up almost to bursting; nor did they recover their proper tone for many a week. I cannot conceive that the people whom the New Testament speaks of as being “possessed of devils,” could have been more dreadful in appearance, or more outrageous in their actions, than was M——; nor can I help suggesting the thought, that, possibly, they were in reality nothing more than the maniacs of the worst kind. And is not a man transformed into a devil, when his reason is utterly overturned?

On seeing M—— the next morning, I found he had passed a terrible night—that the constraint of the strait waistcoat filled him incessantly with a fury that was absolutely diabolical. His tongue was dreadfully lacerated; and the whites of his eyes, with perpetual straining, were discoloured with a reddish hue, like ferrets’ eyes. He was truly a piteous spectacle! One’s heart ached to look at him, and think for a moment, of the fearful contrast he formed to the gay M—— he was only a few days before, the delight of refined society, and the idol of all his friends! He lay in a most precarious state for a fortnight; and though the fits of outrageous madness had ceased, or become much mitigated, and interrupted not unfrequently with “lucid intervals,” as the phrase is, I began to be apprehensive of his sinking eventually into that hopeless, deplorable condition, idiocy. During one of his intervals of sanity—when the savage fiend relaxed, for a moment, the hold he had taken of the victim’s faculties—M—— said something according with

—and it was well they did. Suppose they had uttered any sudden shriek, or attempted to interfere, or made a disturbance of any kind—what would have become of us all?

a fact which it was impossible for him to have any knowledge of by the senses, which was to me singular and inexplicable.* It was about nine o'clock in the morning of the third day, after that on which the scene above described took place, that M——, who was lying in a state of the utmost lassitude and exhaustion, scarcely able to open his eyes, turned his head slowly towards Mr ——, the apothecary, who was sitting by his bedside, and whispering to him—"They are preparing to bury that wretched fellow next door—hush!—hush!—one of the coffin trestles has fallen—hush!" Mr ——, and the nurse, who had heard him, both strained their ears to listen, but could hear not even a mouse stirring—"there's somebody come in—a lady, kissing his lips before he's screwed down—Oh! I hope she won't be scorched—that's all!" He then turned away his head, with no appearance of emotion, and presently fell asleep. Through mere curiosity, Mr ——, looked at his watch; and, from subsequent enquiry, ascertained, that, sure enough, about the time when his patient had spoken, they *were* about burying his neighbour; that one of the trestles *did* slip a little aside, and the coffin, in consequence, was near falling; and, finally, marvellous to tell, that a lady, one of the deceased's relatives, I believe, did come and kiss the corpse, and cry bitterly over it! Neither Mr —— nor the nurse heard any noise whatever during the time of the burial preparations next door, for the people had

* This incident has been selected, by the conductor of a quarterly religious journal, called "*The Morning Watch*," as a striking instance of supernatural agency, and tending to confirm certain notions which have lately occasioned not a little astonishment and confusion in the world.

been earnestly requested to be as quiet about them as possible, and really made no disturbance whatever. By what strange means he had acquired his information—whether or not he was indebted for some portion of it to the exquisite delicacy, the morbid sensitiveness of the organs of hearing, I cannot conjecture ; but how are we to account for the latter part of what he uttered about the lady's kissing the corpse, &c.?—On another occasion, during one of his most placid moods, but *not* in any lucid interval, he insisted on my taking pen, ink, and paper, and turning amanuensis. To quiet him, I acquiesced, and wrote what he dictated ; and the manuscript now lies before me, and is, *verbatim et literatim*, as follows :—

“ I, T—— M——, saw—what saw I? A solemn silver grove—there were *innumerable spirits** sleeping among the branches—(and it is this, though unobserved of naturalists, that makes the aspen tree's leaves to quiver so much—it is this, I say, namely the rustling movements of the spirits)—and in the midst of this grove was a beautiful site for a statue, and one there assuredly was—but *what* a statue! Transparent, of a stupendous size, through which—the sky was cloudy and troubled—a ship was seen sinking at sea, and the crew at cards ; but the *good spirit* of the storm saved them ; for he showed them the key of the universe : and a shoal of sharks, with murderous eyes, were disappointed of a meal. Lo, man, behold!—another part of this statue—what a one!—has a *FISSURE* in it—it opens—widens into a parlour, in darkness ; and now shall be disclosed the *horror of horrors* ; for, lo ! some one sitting—

* The words in Italics were at the instance of M——.

sitting—easy-chair—fiery face—fiend—fiend—O God ! O God ! save me !” cried he. He ceased speaking, with a shudder ; nor did he resume the dictation, for he seemed in a moment to have forgotten that he had dictated at all. I preserved the paper ; and, gibberish though it is, I consider it both curious and highly characteristic throughout. Judging from the latter part of it, where he speaks of a “*dark parlour, with some fiery-faced fiend sitting in an easy chair,*” and coupling this with various similar expressions and allusions which he made during his ravings, I felt convinced that his fancy was occupied with some one individual image of horror, which had scared him into madness, and now clung to his disordered faculties like a fiend. He often talked about “spectres,” “spectral ;” and uttered, incessantly, the words “spectre-smitten.” The nurse once asked him what he meant by these words ; he started—grew disturbed—his eye glanced with affright—and he shook his head, exclaiming, “Horror !” A few days afterwards, he hired an amanuensis, who, of course, was duly apprized of the sort of person he had to deal with ; and, after a painfully ludicrous scene, M—— attempting to beat down the man’s terms from a guinea and a half a-week, to *half-a-crown*, he engaged him for *three guineas*, he said, and insisted on his taking up his station at the side of the bed, in order that he might minute down every word that was uttered. M—— told him he was going to dictate a *romance* !

It would have required, in truth, the “pen of a ready writer” to keep pace with poor M——’s utterance ; for he raved on at a prodigious rate, in a strain, it need hardly be said, of unconnected absurdities. Really it

was inconceivable nonsense ; rhapsodical rantings in the Maturin style, full of vaults, sepulchres, spectres, devils, magic—with here and there a thought of real poetry. It was piteous to peruse it ! His amanuensis found it impossible to keep up with him, and therefore profited by a hint from one of us, and instead of writing, merely moved his pen rapidly over the paper, scrawling all sorts of ragged lines and figures to resemble writing ! M—— never asked him to read it over, nor requested to see it himself ; but, after about fifty pages were done, dictated a title-page—pitched on publishers—settled the price and number of volumes—*four* !—and then exclaimed—“ Well !—thank God—*that's* off my mind at last !” He never mentioned it afterwards ; and his brother committed the *whole* to the flames about a week after.

M—— had not, however, yet done with his amanuensis, but put his services in requisition in quite another capacity—that of reader. Milton was the book he selected ; and, actually, they went through very nearly nine books, M—— perpetually interrupting him with comments, sometimes saying surpassingly absurd, and occasionally very fine, forcible things. All this formed a truly touching illustration of that beautiful, often quoted sentiment of Horace—

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu. *Epist. Lib. I. Ep. 2. 69. 70.*

As there was no prospect of his speedily recovering the use of his reasoning faculties, he was removed to a private asylum, where I attended him regularly for more than six months. He was reduced to a state of drivelling idiocy—complete fatuity ! Lamentable ! heart-rending !

Oh ! how deplorable to see a man of superior intellect—one whose services are really wanted in society—the prey of madness !

Dr Johnson was well known to express a peculiar horror of insanity. “ O God !” said he, “ afflict my body with what tortures thou wilt ; but *spare my reason !*” Where is he that does not join him in uttering such a prayer ?

It would be beside my purpose here to enter into abstract speculations, or purely professional details, concerning insanity ; but one or two brief and simple remarks, the fruits of much experience and consideration, may perhaps be pardoned me.

It is still a *vexata quæstio* in our profession, whether persons of strong or weak minds—whether the ignorant or the highly cultivated—are most frequently the subjects of insanity. If we are disposed to listen to a generally shrewd and intelligent writer (Dr Monro, in his “ *Philosophy of Human Nature*,”) we are to understand, that “ children, and people of weak minds, are *never* subject to madness ; for,” adds the Doctor, “ how can he despair, who cannot think ?” Though the logic here is somewhat loose and leaky, I am disposed to agree with the Doctor in the main ; and I ground my acquiescence—

First, On the truth of Locke’s distinction, laid down in his great work (Book ii. c. ii. §§ 12 and 13), where he mentions the difference “ between idiots and madmen,” and thus states the sum of his observations :—“ In short, herein seems to lie the difference between idiots and madmen, that madmen put wrong ideas together, and do make wrong propositions, but argue and reason *right* from them ; but idiots make very few or no propositions, and reason scarce at all.”

Secondly, On the corroboration afforded to it by my own experience. I have generally found that those persons who are most *distinguished* for their powers of thought and reasoning, when of sound mind, continue to exercise that power, but incorrectly, and be distinguished by their exercise of that power, when of unsound mind—their understanding retaining, even after such a shock and revolution of its faculties, the bent and bias impressed upon it beforehand ; and I have found, farther, that it has been chiefly those of such character—*i. e.* thinkers—that have fallen into madness ; and that it is the perpetual straining and taxing of their strong intellects at the expense of their bodies, that has brought them into such a calamity. Suppose, therefore, we say, in short, that *madness* is the fate of strong minds, or, at least, minds many degrees removed from weak ; and *idiocy* of weak, imbecile minds. This supposition, however, involves a sorry sort of compliment to the fair sex ; for it is notorious that the annual majority of those received into lunatic asylums, are *females*.

I have found imaginative, fanciful people, the most liable to attacks of insanity ; and have had under my care four such instances, or, at least, very nearly resembling the one I am now relating, in which insanity has ensued from sudden *fright*. And it is easily accounted for. The imagination—the predominant faculty—is immediately appealed to ; and, eminently lively and tenacious of impressions, exerts its superior and more practised powers, at the expense of the judgment, or reason, which it tramples upon and crushes. There is then nothing left in the mind that may make head against this unnatural dominancy ; and the result is generally not unlike that in the present instance. As for my general

system of treatment, it may all be comprised in a word or two—acquiescence ; submission ; suggestion ; soothing.* Had I pursued a different plan with M——, what might have been the disastrous issue !

To return, however : The reader may possibly recollect seeing something like the following expression, occurring in "*The Broken Heart*;" † "A candle flickering and expiring in its socket, which suddenly shoots up into an instantaneous brilliance, and then is utterly extinguished." I have referred to it, merely because it affords a very apt illustration—apter than any that now suggests itself to me—of what sometimes takes place in madness. The roaring flame of insanity sinks into the sullen smouldering embers of complete fatuity, and remains so for months ; when, like that of the candle just alluded to, it will instantaneously gather up and concentrate its expiring energies into one terrific blaze—one final paroxysm of outrageous mania—and, lo ! it has consumed itself utterly—burnt itself out—and the patient is unexpectedly restored to reason. The experience of my medical readers, if it have lain at all in the track of insanity, must have presented such cases to their notice not unfrequently. However metaphysical ingenuity may set us speculating about "the why and wherefore" of it—the *fact* is undeniable. It was thus with Mr M——. He had sunk into the deplorable condition of a simple, harmless, melancholy idiot, and was released from formal constraint ; but suddenly, one morning while at breakfast, he sprang upon the person who always attended him ; and, had not the man been very muscular, and prac-

* See the case, "*Intriguing and Madness*," Vol. i. p. 128.

† Vol. i. p. 141.

tised in such matters, he must have been soon overpowered, and perhaps murdered. A long and deadly wrestle took place between them. Thrice they threw each other; and the keeper saw that the madman several times cast a longing eye towards a knife which lay on the breakfast table, and endeavoured to sway his antagonist so as to get himself within its reach. Both were getting exhausted with the prolonged struggle—and the keeper, really afraid for his life, determined to settle matters as soon as possible. The instant, therefore, that he could get his right arm disengaged, he hit poor M—— a dreadful blow on the side of the head, which felled him, and he lay senseless on the floor, the blood pouring fast from his ears, nose, and mouth. He was again confined in a strait waistcoat, and conveyed to bed—when, what with exhaustion, and the effect of the medicines which had been administered, he fell into profound sleep, which continued all day, and, with little intermission, through the night. When he awoke in the morning, lo! he was “in his right mind!” His calm tranquillized features, and the sobered expression of his eyes, showed that the sun of reason had really once more dawned upon his long benighted faculties. Ay—he was

—— himself again.

I heard of the good news before I saw him; and, on hastening to his room, found it was indeed so—his altered appearance, at first sight, amply corroborated it! How different the mild sad smile now beaming on his pallid features, from the vacant stare—the unmeaning laugh of idiocy—or the fiendish glare of madness!—The contrast was strong as that between the soft stealing expansive

twilight, and the burning blaze of noonday. He spoke in a very feeble, almost inarticulate voice—complained of dreadful exhaustion—whispered something indistinctly about “waking from a long and dreary dream;” and said that he felt, as it were, only half awake—or alive. All was new—strange—startling! Fearful of taxing too much his new-born powers, I feigned an excuse, and took my leave, recommended him cooling and quieting medicines, and perfect seclusion from visitors. How exhilarated I felt my own spirits all that day!

He gradually, very gradually, but surely, recovered. One of the earliest indications of his reviving interest in life,

And all its busy, thronging scenes,

was an abrupt enquiry whether Trinity term had commenced, and whether or not he was now eligible to be called to the bar. He was utterly unconscious that *three* terms had flitted over him, while he lay in the gloomy wilderness of insanity; and when I satisfied him of this fact, he alluded, with a sigh, to the beautiful thought of one of our old dramatists, who, illustrating the unconscious lapse of years over “*Endymion*,” makes one tell him—

And behold the twig to which thou laidest thy head, is now become a tree!*

It was not till several days after his restoration to reason, that I ventured to enter into any thing like

* *Endymion*, by JOHN LILLY. The context is so very beautiful that I am tempted to quote it:—

Cynthia. Endymion! Speak, sweet Endymion! Knowest thou not Cynthia?

detailed conversation with him, or to make particular allusions to his late illness; and on this occasion it was that he related to me his rencontre with the fearful object which had overturned his reason; adding, with intense emotion, that not ten thousand a-year should induce him to live in the same chambers any more.

During the course of his progress towards complete recovery, memory shot its strengthening rays farther and farther back into the inspissated gloom in which the long interval of insanity had shrouded his mind; but it was too dense—too “palpable an obscure”—to be ever

Endymion. Oh, Heaven! what do I behold? Fair Cynthia? Divine Cynthia?

Cynthia. I am Cynthia, and thou Endymion.

Endymion. Endymion! What do I hear? What! a grey beard, hollow eyes, withered body, and decayed limbs—and all in one night?

Eumenides. One night? Thou hast slept here forty years, by what enchantress, as yet it is not known: and behold, the twig to which thou laidest thy head is now become a tree! Callest thou not Eumenides to remembrance?

Endymion. Thy name I do remember by the sound, but thy favour I do not yet call to mind: only divine Cynthia, to whom time, fortune, death, and destiny are subject, I see and remember: and, in all humility, I regard and reverence.

Cynthia. You shall have good cause to remember Eumenides, who hath, for thy safety, forsaken his own solace.

Endymion. Am I that Endymion who was wont in court to lead my life, and in jousts, tourneys, and arms to exercise my youth? Am I that Endymion?

Eumenides. Thou art that Endymion, and I Eumenides! Wilt thou not yet call me to remembrance?

Endymion. Ah, sweet Eumenides! I now perceive thou art he, and that myself have the name of Endymion; but that this should be my body, I doubt; for how could my curled locks be turned to grey hair, and my strong body to a dying weakness—having waxed old not knowing it?

Act 5th, Scene 1.

completely and thoroughly illuminated. The rays of recollection, however, settled distinctly on some of the more prominent points; and I was several times astonished by his sudden reference to things which he had said and done during the "very depth and quagmire of his disorder."* He asked me once, for instance, whether he had not made an attempt on his life, and with a razor, and how it was that he did not succeed. He had no recollection, however, of the long and deadly struggle with his keeper—at least he never made the slightest allusion to it, nor, of course, did any one else.

"I don't much mind talking these horrid things over with you, Doctor, for you know all the *ins and outs* of the whole affair; but if any of my friends or relatives presume to torture me with any allusions or enquiries of this sort—I'll fight them! they'll drive me mad again!" The reader may suppose the hint was not disregarded. All recovered maniacs have a dread—an absolute horror—of any reference being made to their madness, or any thing they have said or done during the course of it; and is it not easily accounted for?

"Did the horrible spectre which occasioned your illness in the first instance, ever present itself to you afterwards?" I once enquired. He paused and turned pale. Presently he replied, with considerable agitation—"Yes, yes—it scarcely ever left me. It has not always preserved its spectral consistency, but has entered into the most astounding—the most preposterous combinations conceivable, with other objects and scenes—all of them, however, more or less, of a distressing or fearful

* Sir Thomas Brown.

character—many of them terrific !” I begged him, if it were not unpleasant to him, to give me a specimen of them.

“ It is certainly far from gratifying to trace scenes of such shame and horror ; but I will comply as far as I am able,” said he, rather gloomily. “ Once I saw him” (meaning the spectre) “ leading on an army of huge speckled and crested serpents against me ; and when they came upon me—for I had no power to run away—I suddenly found myself in the midst of a pool of stagnant water, absolutely alive with slimy, shapeless reptiles ; and while endeavouring to make my way out, *he* rose to the surface, his face hissing in the water, and blazing bright as ever ! Again, I thought I saw him in single combat, by the gates of Eden, with Satan—and the air thronged and heated with swart faces looking on !” This was unquestionably some dim confused recollection of the Milton readings, in the earlier part of his illness. “ Again, I thought I was in the act of opening my snuff-box, when *he* issued from it, diminutive, at first, in size—but swelling, soon, into gigantic proportions, and his fiery features diffusing a light and heat around, that absolutely scorched and blasted ! At another time, I thought I was gazing upwards on a sultry summer sky ; and, in the midst of a luminous fissure in it, made by the lightning, I distinguished *his* accursed figure, with his glowing features wearing an expression of horror, and his limbs outstretched, as if he had been hurled down from some height or other, and was falling through the sky towards *me*. He came—he came—flung himself into my recoiling arms—and clung to me—burning, scorching, withering my soul within me ! I

thought, farther, that I was all the while the subject of strange, paradoxical, contradictory feelings towards him—that I, at one and the same time, loved and loathed, feared and despised him !” * He mentioned several other instances of the confusions in his “chamber of imagery.” I told him of his sudden exclamation concerning Mr T——’s burial, and its singular corroboration ; but he either did not, or affected not, to recollect any thing about it. He told me he had a full and distinct recollection of being for a long time possessed with the notion of making himself a “sacrifice” of some sort or other, and that he was seduced or goaded on to do so, by the spectre, by the most dazzling temptations, and under the most appalling threats—one of which latter was, that God would plunge him into hell for ever, if he did not offer up himself—that if he did so, he should be a sublime spectacle to the universe, &c. &c. &c.

“Do you recollect any thing about dictating a novel or a romance ?” He started, as if struck with some sudden recollection. “No—but I’ll tell you what I recollect well—that the spectre and I were set to copy all the tales and romances that ever had been written, in a large, bold, round hand, and then translate them into Greek or Latin verse !” He smiled, nay even laughed at the thought, almost the first time of his giving way to such emotions since his recovery. He added, that as to the latter, the idea of the utter hopelessness of ever getting through such a stupendous undertaking never once presented itself to him, and that he should have gone on with it, but that he lost his inkstand !

* A very curious case has been handed to me corroboratory of this strange condition of feeling ; but I am not allowed to make it public.

“ Had you ever a clear and distinct idea that you had lost the right use of reason ? ”

“ Why, about that, to tell the truth, I’ve been puzzling myself a good deal, and yet I cannot say any thing decisive. I *do* fancy that, at times, I had short, transient glimpses into the real state of things, but they were so evanescent. I am conscious of feeling, at these times, incessant fury, arising from a sense of personal constraint, and I longed once to strangle some one who was giving me medicine.”

But one of the most singular of all is yet to come. He still persisted—yes, *then*—after his complete recovery, as we supposed, in avowing his belief that we had hired a huge boa serpent from Exeter ’Change, to come and keep constant watch over him, to constrain his movements when he threatened to become violent ; that it lay constantly coiled up under his bed for that purpose ; that he could now and then feel the motions—the writhing undulating motions, of its coils—hear it utter a sort of *sigh*, and see it often elevate its head over the bed, and play with its slippery, delicate forked tongue over his face, to soothe him to sleep. When poor M——, with a serious, earnest air, assured me he *STILL* believed all this, my hopes of his complete and final restoration to sanity were dashed at once ! How such an absurd—in short, I have no terms in which I may adequately characterise it—how, I say, such an idea could possibly be persisted in, I was bewildered in attempting to conceive. I frequently strove to reason him out of it, but in vain. To no purpose did I burlesque and caricature the notion almost beyond all bounds ; it was useless to remind him of the blank impossibility of it ; he regarded

me with such a face as I should exhibit to a fluent personage, quite in earnest in demonstrating to me that the moon was made of green cheese.

I have once before heard of a patient who, after recovering from an attack of insanity, retained one solitary crotchet—one little stain or speck of lunacy—about which, and which alone, he was mad to the end of his life. I supposed such to be the case with M——. It was possible—barely so, I thought—that he might entertain the preposterous notion about the boa, and yet be sound in the general texture of his mind. I prayed God it might ; I “ hoped against hope.” The last evening I ever spent with him, was occupied with my endeavouring, once for all, to disabuse him of the idea in question ; and, in the course of our conversation, he disclosed one or two little symptoms—specks of lunacy—which made me leave him, filled with disheartening doubts as to the probability of a permanent recovery.

* * * * *

My worst fears were awfully realized. In about five years from the period above alluded to, M——, who had got married, and had enjoyed excellent general health, was spending the summer with his family at Brussels—and one night destroyed himself—alas ! alas ! *destroyed* himself in a manner too terrible to mention !

CHAPTER II.

THE MARTYR PHILOSOPHER.

IT has been my lot to witness many dreadful deathbeds. I am not overstating the truth when I assert, that nearly eight out of every ten that have come under my personal observation—of course, excluding *children*—have more or less partaken of this character. I know only one way of accounting for it, and some may accuse me of cant for adverting to it—men will not LIVE as if they were to die. They are content to let that event come upon them “like a thief in the night.”* They grapple with their final foe, not merely unprepared, but absolutely incapacitated for the struggle, and then wonder and wail at their being overcome and “trodden under foot.” I have, in some of the foregoing chapters, attempted to sketch three or four dreary scenes of this description, my pencil trembling in my hand the while ;

* One of my patients, whom a long course of profligacy had brought to a painful and premature deathbed, once quoted this striking Scriptural expression when within less than an hour of his end, and with a thrill of terror.

and could I but command colours dark enough, it were yet in my power to portray others far more appalling than any that have gone before—cases of those who have left life “ clad in horror’s hideous robe”—“ *whose sun has gone down at noon in darkness*,” if I may be pardoned for quoting the fearful language of a very unfashionable book.

Now, however, for a while at least, let the storm pass away ; the accumulated clouds of guilt, despair, madness, disperse ; and the lightning of the fiercer passions cease to shed its disastrous glare over our minds. Let us rejoice beneath the serenened heavens ; let us seek sunnier spots—by turning to the more peaceful pages of humanity. Let me attempt to lay before the reader a short account of one whose exit was eminently calm, tranquil, and dignified ; who did not skulk into his grave with shame and fear, but laid down life with honour ; leaving behind him the influence of his greatness and goodness, like the evening sun—who smiles sadly on the sweet scenes he is quitting, and a holy lustre glows long on the features of nature—

Quiet, as a nun

Breathless with adoration.—WORDSWORTH.

Even were I disposed, I could not gratify the reader with any thing like a fair sketch of the early days of Mr E——. I have often lamented, that, knowing as I did the simplicity and frankness of his disposition, I did not once avail myself of several opportunities which fell in my way of becoming acquainted with the leading parti-

culars of his life. Now, however, as is generally the case, I can but deplore my negligence, when remedying it is impossible. All that I have now in my power to record, are some particulars of his latter days. Interesting I know they will be considered: may they prove instructive! I hope the few records I have here preserved, will show how a mind, long disciplined by philosophy, and strengthened by religious principle, may triumph over the assault of evils and misfortunes combined against its *expiring* energies. It is fitting, I say, the world should hear how nobly E—— surmounted such a sudden influx of disasters as have seldom before burst overwhelmingly upon a deathbed.

And should this chapter of my Diary chance to be seen by any of his relatives and early friends I hope the reception it shall meet with from the public may stimulate them to give the world some fuller particulars of Mr E——'s valuable, if not very varied life. More than seven years have elapsed since his death; and, as yet, the only intimation the public has had of the event, has been in the dreary corner of the public prints allotted to "*Deaths*"—and a brief enumeration in one of the quarterly journals of some of his leading contributions to science. The world at large, however, scarcely know that he ever lived—or, at least, *how* he lived or died.—But how often is such the fate of modest merit!

My first acquaintance with Mr E—— commenced accidentally, not long before his death, at one of the evening meetings of a learned society, of which we were both members. The first glimpse I caught of him interested me much, and inspired me with a kind of reverence for him. He came into the room within a few minutes of

the chair's being taken,* and walked quietly and slowly, with a kind of stooping gait, to one of the benches near the fire-place, where he sat down without taking off his great-coat, and, crossing his gloved hands on the knob of a high walking-stick, he rested his chin on them, and in that attitude continued throughout the evening. He removed his hat when the chairman made his appearance; and I never saw a finer head in my life. The crown was quite bald, but the base was fringed round, as it were, with a little soft, glossy, silver-hued hair, which in the distance, looked like a faint halo. His forehead was of noble proportions; and, in short, there was an expression of serene intelligence in his features, blended with meekness and dignity, which quite enchanted me.

“Pray, who is that gentleman?” I enquired of my friend Dr D——, who was sitting beside me. “Do you mean that elderly thin man sitting near the fire-place, with a great-coat on?”—“The same.”—“Oh! it is Mr E——, one of the very ablest men in the room, though he talks the least,” whispered my friend; “and a man who comes the nearest to my *beau idéal* of a philosopher of any man I ever knew or heard of in the present day.”

“Why, he does not seem very well known here,” said I, observing that he neither spoke to, nor was spoken to, by any of the members present. “Ah, poor Mr E—— is breaking up, I’m afraid, and that very fast,” replied my friend, with a sigh. “He comes but seldom to our evening meetings, and is not ambitious of making many acquaintance.” I intimated an eager desire to be intro-

* “Les sociétés savantes en Angleterre sont réglées par les mêmes lois d’étiquette que les sociétés politiques.”—*Note by the French Translator.*

duced to him. "Oh, nothing easier," replied my friend "for I know him more familiarly than any one present, and he is, besides, simple as a child in his manners, even to eccentricity, and the most amiable man in the world. I'll introduce you when the meeting's over." While we were thus whispering together, the subject of our conversation suddenly rose from his seat, and, with a little trepidation of manner, addressed a few words to the chair, in correction of some assertions which he interrupted a member in advancing. It was something, if I recollect right, about the atomic theory, and was received with marked deference by the president, and general "Hear! hears!" from the members. He then resumed his seat, in which he was presently followed by the speaker, whom he had evidently discomfited; his eyes glistened, and his cheeks were flushed with the effort he had made, and he did not rise again till the conclusion of the sitting. We then made our way to him, and my friend introduced me. He received me politely and frankly. He complained, in a weak voice, that the walk thither had quite exhausted him—that he feared his health was failing him, &c.

"Why, Mr E——, you *look* very well," said my friend.

"Ay, perhaps I do; but you know how little faith is to be put in the hale looks of an old and weak man. Age generally puts a good face on bad matters, even to the last," he added, with a smile and a shake of the head.

"A sad night!" he exclaimed, on hearing the wind howling drearily without, for we were standing by a window at the north-east corner of the large building; and a March wind swept cruelly by, telling bitter things to the

old and feeble who had to face it. "Allow me to recommend that you wrap up your neck and breast well," said I.

"I intend it indeed," he replied, as he was folding up a large silk handkerchief. "One must guard one's candle with one's hand, or Death will blow it out in a moment. That's the sort of treatment we old people get from him; no ceremony—he waits for one at a bleak corner, and puffs out one's expiring light with a breath; and then hastens on to the more vigorous torch of youth."

"Have you a coach?" enquired Dr D——. "A coach! I shall *walk* it in less than twenty minutes," said Mr E——, buttoning his coat up to the chin.

"Allow me to offer you both a seat in mine," said I; "it is at the door, and I am driving towards your neighbourhood." He and Dr D—— accepted the offer, and in a few minutes' time we entered and drove off. We soon set down the latter, who lived close by; and then my new philosophic friend and I were left together. Our conversation turned, for a while, on the evening's discussion at the society; and, in a very few words, remarkably well chosen, he pointed out what he considered to have been errors committed by Sir —— and Dr ——, the principal speakers. I was not more charmed by the lucidness of his views, than by the unaffected diffidence with which they were expressed.

"Well," said he, after a little pause in our conversation, "your carriage motion is mighty pleasant! It seduces one into a feeling of indolence! these delicious, soft, yielding cushioned backs and seats—they would make a man loath to use his legs again! Yet I never kept a carriage in my life, though I have often wanted

one, and could easily have afforded it once." I asked him why? He replied, "It was not because he feared childish accusations of ostentation, nor yet in order to save money, but because he thought it becoming to a rational being to be content with the natural means God has given him, both as to matter of necessity and pleasure. It was an insult," he said, "to Nature, while she was in full vigour, and had exhibited little or no deficiency in her functions—to hurry to *Art*. For my own part," he continued, "I have always found a quiet but exquisite satisfaction, in continuing independent of *her* assistance, though at the cost of some occasional inconvenience: it gives you a consciousness of relying incessantly on Him who made you, and sustains you in being. Do you recollect the solemn saying of Johnson to Garrick, on seeing the immense levies the latter had made on the resources of ostentatious ornamental art? 'Davie, Davie, these are the things that make a deathbed terrible!'" I said something about Diogenes. "Ah!" he replied quickly, "the other extreme. He accused nature of superfluity, redundancy. A proper subordination of externals to her use, is part of her province; else why is she placed among so many materials, and with such facilities of using them? My principle, if such it may be called, is, that art may *minister* to nature but not *pamper* or *surfeit* her with superfluities.

"You would laugh, perhaps, to come to my house, and see the extent to which I have carried my principles into practice. I, yes, I, whose life has been devoted, among other things, to the discovery of mechanical contrivances! You, accustomed, perhaps, to the elegant redundancies of these times, may consider my house and

furniture absurdly plain and naked—a tree stripped of its leaves, where the birds are left to lodge on the bare branches! But I want little, and do not ‘want that little long.’—Stop, however, here is my house! Come—a laugh, you know, is good before bed—will you have it now? Come, see a curiosity—a Diogenes, but no Cynic!” Had the reader seen the modesty, the cheerfulness, the calmness of manner with which Mr E——, from time to time, joined in the conversation, of which the above is the substance, and been aware of the weight due to his sentiments, as those of one who had really LIVED UP to them all his life—who had earned a noble character in the philosophical world—if he be aware how often old age and pedantry, grounded on a small reputation, are blended in repulsive union—he might not consider the trouble I have taken thrown away, in recording this my first conversation with Mr E——. He was, indeed, an instance of “philosophy teaching by example;” a sort of character to be sought out for in life, as one at whose feet we may safely sit down and learn.

I could not accept of Mr E——’s invitation that evening, as I had a patient to see a little farther on: but I promised him an early call. All my way home my mind was filled with the image of E——, and partook of the tranquillity and pensiveness of its guest.

I scarcely know how it was, but, with all my admiration of Mr E——, I suffered the month of May to approach its close before I again encountered him. It was partly owing to a sudden increase of business, created by a raging scarlet fever—and partly occasioned by illness in my own family. I often thought and talked, however, of the philosopher, for that was the name he

went by with Dr D—— and myself. Mr E—— had invited us both to take “an old-fashioned friendly cup of tea” with him; and, accordingly, about six o’clock, we found ourselves driving down to his house. On our way, Dr D—— told me that our friend had been a widower nearly five years; and that the loss, somewhat sudden, of his amiable and accomplished wife, had worked a great change in him by divesting him of nearly all interest in life or its concerns. He pursued even his philosophical occupations with languor—more from a kind of habit than inclination. Still he retained the same evenness and cheerfulness which had distinguished him through life. But the blow had been struck which had severed him from the world’s joys and engagements. He might be compared to a great tree torn up by the root, and laid prostrate by a storm, yet which dies not all at once. The sap is not instantaneously dried up; but for weeks, or even months, you may see the smaller branches still shooting unconsciously into short-lived existence, all fresh and tender from the womb of their dead mother; and a rich green mantle of leaves long concealing from view the poor fallen trunk beneath. Such was the pensive turn my thoughts had taken by the time we had reached Mr E——’s door.

It was a fine summer evening—the hour of calm excitement. The old-fashioned window panes of the house we had stopped at, shone like small sheets of fire in the steady slanting rays of the retiring sun. It was the first house of a respectable antique-looking row, in the suburbs of London, which had been built in the days of Henry the Eighth. Three stately poplars stood sentries before the gateway.

“ Well, here we are at last, at *Plato's Porch*, as I've christened it,” said Dr D——, knocking at the door. On entering the parlour—a large old-fashioned room, furnished with the utmost simplicity, consistent with comfort—we found Mr E—— sitting near the window, reading. He was in a brown dressing-gown, and study cap. He rose and welcomed us cheerfully. “ I have been looking into La Place,” said he, in the first pause which ensued, “ and, a little before your arrival, had flattered myself that I had detected some erroneous calculations ; and only look at the quantity of evidence that was necessary to convince me that I was a simpleton by the side of La Place !” pointing to two or three sheets of paper crammed with small algebraical characters in pencil—a fearful array of symbols—“ $\sqrt{\quad} 3 a^2, \square \frac{y^2}{z^2} + 9 - n = 9 ; n \times \log. e$ ”—and sines, co-sines, series, &c., without end. I had the curiosity to take up the volume in question, while he was speaking to Dr D——, and noticed on the fly-leaf the complimentary autograph of the Marquis La Place, who had sent his work to Mr E——. Tea was presently brought in ; and as soon as the plain old-fashioned china, &c., had been placed on the table by the man-servant—himself a knowing old fellow as I ever saw in my life—Miss E——, the philosopher's niece, made her appearance—an elegant unaffected girl, with the same style of features as her uncle.

“ I can give a shrewd guess at your thoughts, Dr ——,” said Mr E——, smiling, as he caught my eye following the movements of the man-servant till he left the room. “ You fancy my keeping a man-servant to wait at table does not tally very well with what I said the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you.”

“O dear! I’m sure you’re mistaken, Mr E——. I was struck with the singularity of his countenance and manners—those of a stanch old family servant.”

“Ah, Joseph is a vast favourite with my uncle,” said Miss E——, “I can assure you, and fancies himself nearly as great a man as his master,”

“Why, as far as the *pratique* of the laboratory is concerned, I doubt if his superior is to be found in London. He knows *it*, and all my ways, as well as he knows the palm of his own hand! He has the neatest way in the world of making hydrogen gas, and what is more, found it out himself,” said Mr E——, explaining the process; “and then he is a miracle of cleanliness and care! he has not cost me ten shillings in breakage since I knew him. He moves among my brittle wares like a cat on a glass wall.”

“And then he writes and reads for my uncle—does all the minor work of the laboratory—goes on errands—waits at table—in short, he’s invaluable,” said Miss E——.

“Quite a *factotum*, I protest!” exclaimed Dr D——.

“You’d lose your *better half*, then, if he were to die, I suppose,” said I quickly.

“No! *that* can happen but *once*,” replied Mr E——, alluding to the death of his wife. Conversation flagged for a moment. “You’ve forgotten,” at length said E——, breaking the melancholy pause, “the very chiefest of poor Joseph’s accomplishments—What an admirable unwearied *nurse* he is to me!” At that moment Joseph entered the room, with a note in his hand, which he gave to Mr E——. I guessed where it came from—for, happening, a few moments before, to cast my eye to the window, I saw a footman walking up to the door; and

there was no mistaking the gorgeous scarlet liveries of the Duke of ——. E——, after glancing over the letter, begged us to excuse him for a minute or two, as the man was waiting for an answer.

“*You*, of course, knew what my uncle alluded to,” said Miss E——, addressing Dr D—— in a low tone, as soon as E—— had closed the door after him, “when he spoke of Joseph’s being a *nurse*—don’t you?” Dr D—— nodded. “My poor uncle,” she continued, addressing me, “has been, for nearly *twenty-five* years, afflicted with a dreadful disease in the spine; and, during all that time, he has suffered a perfect martyrdom from it. He could not stand *straight* up, if it were to save his life, and he is obliged to sleep in a bed of a very curious description—the joint contrivance of himself and Joseph. He takes nearly half an ounce of laudanum every night, at bedtime; without which, the pains, which are always most excruciating at night-time, would not suffer him to get a moment’s sleep!—Oh, how often have I seen him rolling about on this carpet and hearth-rug—yes, even in the presence of visitors—in a perfect ecstasy of agony, and uttering the most heart-breaking groans!”

“And I can add,” said Dr D——, “that he is the most perfect Job—the most angelic sufferer, I ever saw!”

“Indeed, indeed, he is,” rejoined Miss E——, with emotion. “I can say, with perfect truth, that I never once heard him murmur or complain at his hard fate. When I have been expressing my sympathies, during the extremity of his anguish, he has gasped, ‘Well, well, it *might* have been worse!’”—Miss E—— suddenly raised her handkerchief to her eyes, for they were overflowing.

“Do you see that beautiful little picture hanging over

the mantelpiece?" she enquired, after a pause, which neither Dr D—— nor I seemed inclined to interrupt—pointing to an exquisite oil-painting of the crucifixion. "I have seen my poor uncle lying down on the floor, while in the most violent paroxysms of pain, and, with his eyes fixed intensely on that picture, exclaim—'*Thine* were greater—*thine* were greater!' And then he has presently clasped his hands upwards; a smile has beamed upon his pallid quivering features, and he has told me the pain was abated."

"I once was present during one of these painfully interesting scenes," said Dr D——, "and have seen such a heavenly radiance on his countenance, as could not have been occasioned by the mere sudden cessation of the anguish he had been suffering."

"Does not this strange disorder abate with his increasing years?" I enquired.

"Alas, no!" replied Miss E——; "but is, if possible, more frequent and severe in its seizures. Indeed, we all think it is wearing him out fast. But for the unwearied services of that faithful creature, Joseph, who sleeps in the same room with him, my uncle must have died long ago."

"How did this terrible disorder attack Mr E——, and when?" I enquired. I was informed that he himself originated the complaint with an injury he sustained when a very young man: he was riding, one day, on horseback, and his horse, suddenly rearing backward, Mr E——'s back came in violent contact with a plank, projecting from behind a cart loaded with timber. He was besides, however, subject to a constitutional feebleness in the spine, derived from his father and grandfather. He had consulted almost every surgeon of eminence in

England, and a few on the Continent ; and spent a little fortune among them—but all had been in vain !

“ Really, you would be quite surprised, Doctor ——,” said Miss E——, “ to know, that, though such a martyr to pain, and now in his sixty-fourth year, my uncle is more active in his habits, and regular in his hours, than I ever knew any one. He rises almost invariably at four o’clock in summer, and at six in winter—and this though so helpless, that, without Joseph’s assistance, he could not dress himself”——

“ Ah ! by the way,” interrupted Dr D——, “ that is another peculiarity in Mr E——’s case : he is subject to a sort of nightly paralysis of the upper extremities, from which he does not completely recover till he has been up for some two or three hours.”

How little had I thought of the under current of agony flowing incessantly beneath the calm surface of his cheerful and dignified demeanour ! O philosophy !—O Christian philosophy !—I had failed to detect any marks of suffering in his features, though I had now had two interviews with him—so completely, even hitherto, had “ his unconquerable mind conquered the clay”—as one of our old writers expresses it. If I had admired and respected him heretofore, on the ground of Dr D——’s opinion, how did I now feel disposed to adore him ! I looked on him as an instance of long-tried heroism and fortitude, almost unparalleled in the history of man. Such thoughts were passing through my mind, when Mr E—— re-entered the room. What I had heard during his absence, made me now look on him with ten-fold interest. I wondered that I had overlooked his stoop—and the permanent print of pain on his pallid

cheek. I gazed at him, in short, with feelings of sympathy and reverence, akin to those called forth by a picture of one of the ancient martyrs.

"I'm sorry to have been deprived of your company so long," said he; "but I have had to answer an invitation, and several questions besides from——I daresay you know whom?" addressing Dr D——.

"I can guess, on the principle *ex ungue*——the gaudy livery, 'vaunts of royalty'——eh? Is it——?"

"Yes. He has invited me to dine with Lord ——, Sir ——, and several other members of the —— Society, at ——, this day week, but I have declined. At my time of life, I can't stand late hours and excitement. Besides, one must learn betimes to *wean* from the world, or be suddenly snatched from it, screaming like a child," said Mr E——, with an impressive air.

"I believe you are particularly intimate with ——; at least I have heard so. Are you?" enquired Dr D——.

"No. I might possibly have been so, for —— has shown great consideration towards me; but I can assure you, I am the sought, rather than the seeker, and have been all my life."

"It is often fatal to philosophical independence to approach too frequently, and too nearly, the magic circle of the court," said I.

"True. Science is, and should be, aspiring. So is the eagle; but the royal bird never approaches so near the sun, as to be drowned in its blaze. Q—— has been nothing since he became a courtier." * * *

"What do you think of ——'s pretensions to science, generally, and his motives for seeking so anxiously the intimacy of the learned?" enquired Dr D——.

“Why, ——,” replied E——, with some hesitation, “’tis a wonderful thing for him to know even a fiftieth part of what he does. He is popularly acquainted with the outlines of most of the leading sciences. He went through a regular course of readings with my admirable friend —— : but he has not the *time* necessary to ensure a successful prosecution of science. It is, however, infinitely advantageous to science and literature, to have the willing and active patronage of Royalty. I never knew him exhibit one trait of overbearing dogmatism ; and that is saying much for one whom all flatter always. It *has* struck me, however, that he has rather too anxious an eye towards securing the character and applause of a MÆCENAS.”

“Pray, Mr E——, do you recollect mentioning to me an incident which occurred at a large dinner party given by ——, where you were present, when Dr —— made use of these words to —— : ‘ *Does not your —— think it possible for a man to pelt another with potatoes, to provoke him to fling peaches in return, for want of other missiles ?*’ and the furious answer was —— ——.”

“We will drop that subject, if you please,” said E—— coldly, at the same time colouring, and giving my friend a peculiar monitory look.

“I know well, personally, that —— has done very many noble things in his day—most of them, comparatively, in secret ; and one magnificent action he has performed lately towards a man of scientific eminence, who has been as unfortunate as he is deserving, which will probably never come to the public ear, unless —— and —— die suddenly,” said Mr —— . He had scarcely uttered these words, when he turned suddenly pale,

laid down his tea-cup with a quivering hand, and slipped slowly from his chair to the floor, where he lay at his full length, rolling to and fro, with his hands pressed upon the lower part of his spine—and all the while uttering deep sighs and groans. The big drops of perspiration, rolling from his forehead down his cheeks, evidenced the dreadful agony he was enduring. Dr D—— and I both knelt down on one knee by his side, proffering our assistance; but he entreated us to leave him to himself for a few moments, and he should soon be better.

“Emma!” he gasped, calling his niece—who, sobbing bitterly, was at his side in a moment—“kiss me—that’s a dear girl—and go up to bed—but on your way, send Joseph here directly.” She retired; and, in a few moments, Joseph entered hastily, with a broad leathern band, which he drew round his master’s waist and buckled tightly. He then pressed with both his hands for some time upon the immediate seat of the pain. Our situation was embarrassing and distressing—both of us medical men, and yet compelled to stand by, mere passive spectators of agonies we could neither alleviate nor remove.

“Do you absolutely *despair* of discovering what the precise nature of this complaint is?” I enquired in an under tone.

“Yes—in common with every one else that has tried to discover it. That it is an affection of the spinal chord, is clear; but what is the immediate exciting cause of these tremendous paroxysms, I cannot conjecture,” replied Dr D——.

“What have been the principal remedies resorted to?”

“ Oh every thing—almost every thing that the wit of man could devise—local and general bleedings to a dreadful extent ; irritations and counter irritations without end ; electricity—galvanism—all the resources of medicine and surgery have been ransacked to no purpose.—Look at him !” whispered Dr D——, “ look—look—do you see how his whole body is drawn together in a heap, while his limbs are quivering as though they would fall from him ?—See—see—how they are now struck out, and plunging about, his hands clutching convulsively at the carpet—scarcely a trace of humanity in his distorted features—as if this great and good man were the sport of a demon !”

“ Oh, gracious God ! can we do *nothing* to help him ?” I enquired, suddenly approaching him, almost stifled with my emotions. Mr E—— did not seem conscious of our approach ; but lay rather quieter, groaning—“ Oh—oh—oh—that it would please God to dismiss me from my sufferings !”

“ My dear, dear Mr E——,” exclaimed Dr D——, excessively agitated, “ can we do nothing for you ? Can’t we be of *any* service to you ?”

“ Oh, none—none—none !” he groaned, in tones expressive of utter hopelessness. For more than a quarter of an hour did this victim of disease continue writhing on the floor, and we standing by, “ physicians of no value !” The violence of the paroxysm abated at length, and again we stooped, for the purpose of raising him and carrying him to the sofa—but he motioned us off, exclaiming so faintly as to be almost inaudible—“ No—no, thank you—I must not be moved for this hour—and when I am, it must be to bed.”—“ Then we will bid

you good-evening, and pray to God you may be better in the morning.”—“ Yes—yes ; better—better ; good—good-by,” he muttered indistinctly.

“ Master’s falling asleep, gentlemen, as he always does after these fits,” said Joseph, who had his arms round his suffering master’s neck. We, of course, left immediately, and met Miss E—— in the passage, muffled in her shawl, and sobbing as if she would break her heart.

Dr D—— told me, as we were driving home, that, about two years ago, E—— made a week’s stay with him ; and that, on one occasion, he endured agonies of such dreadful intensity, as nothing could abate, or in any measure alleviate, but two doses of laudanum, of nearly half an ounce each, within half an hour of each other ; and that even then he did not sleep for more than two hours. “ When he awoke,” continued my friend, “ he was lying on the sofa in a state of the utmost exhaustion, the perspiration running from him like water. I asked him if he did not sometimes yield to such thoughts as were suggested to Job by his impetuous friends—to ‘ curse God and die,’ to repine at the long and lingering tortures he had endured nearly all his life, for no apparent crime of his own ? ‘ No, no,’ he replied calmly ; ‘ I’ve suffered too long an apprenticeship to pain for that ! I own I was at first a little disobedient—a little restive—but now I am learning resignation ! Would not useless fretting serve to enhance—to aggravate my pains ? ’ ‘ Well ! ’ I exclaimed, ‘ it puzzles my theology—if any thing could make me sceptical’——. E—— saw the train of my thoughts, and interrupted me, laying his white wasted hand on mine—‘ I always strive to bear in mind that I am in the hands of a God as GOOD as great,

and that I am not to doubt his goodness, because I cannot exactly see *how* he brings it about. Doubtless there are *reasons* for my suffering what I do, which, though at present incomprehensible to me, would appear abundantly satisfactory, could I be made acquainted with them. Oh, Dr D——, *what* would become of me,' said E——, solemnly, 'were I, instead of the rich consolations of religion, to have nothing to rely on but the disheartening speculations of infidelity!—If in *this* world only I have hope,' he continued, looking steadfastly upwards, 'I am of all men most miserable!'—Is it not dangerous to know such a man, lest one should feel inclined to fall down and worship him?" enquired my friend. Indeed I thought so. Surely E—— was a *miracle* of patience and fortitude! and how he had contrived to make his splendid advancements in science, while subject to such almost unheard-of tortures, both as to duration and intensity—had devoted himself so successfully to the prosecution of studies requiring habits of long, patient, profound abstraction—was to me inconceivable.

How few of us are aware of what is suffered by those with whom we are most intimate! How few know the heavy counterbalancings of popularity and eminence—the exquisite agonies, whether physical or mental, inflicted by one irremovable "thorn in the flesh!" Oh! the miseries of that eminence whose chief prerogative too often is—

Above the vulgar herd to rot in state!

How little had I thought, while gazing at the —— Rooms on this admirable man, first fascinated with the *placidity* of his noble features, that I looked at one who

had equal claims to the character of a MARTYR and a philosopher ! How my own petty grievances dwindled away in comparison with those endured by E—— ! How contemptible the pusillanimity I had often exhibited !

And do YOU, reader, who, if a man, are, perhaps, in the habit of cursing and blaspheming while smarting under the toothach, or any of those minor “ills that flesh is heir to,” think, at such times, of poor, meek, suffering E——, and be silent !

I could not dismiss from my mind the painful image of E—— writhing on the floor, as I have above described, but lay the greater part of the night reflecting on the probable nature of his unusual disorder. Was it any thing of a spasmodic nature ? Would not *such* attacks have worn him out long ago ? Was it one of the remoter effects of partial paralysis ? Was it a preternatural pressure on the spinal chord, occasioned by fracture of one of the vertebræ, or enlargement of the intervertebral ligaments ? Or was it owing to a thickening of the medulla-spinalis itself ?

Fifty similar conjectures passed through my mind, excited as well by the singularity of the disease, as by sympathy for the sufferer. Before I fell asleep, I resolved to call on him during the next day, and enquire carefully into the nature of the symptoms, in the forlorn hope of hitting on some means of mitigating his sufferings.

By twelve o'clock at noon I was set down again at his door. A maid-servant answered my summons, and told me that Mr E—— and Joseph were busily engaged in the “*Labbory* !” She took in my card to him, and returned with her master's compliments, and he would

thank me to step in. I followed the girl to the laboratory. On opening the door, I saw E——, and his trusty work-fellow, Joseph, busily engaged fusing some species of metal. The former was dressed as on the preceding evening, with the addition of a long black apron—looked heated and flushed with exercise; and, with his stooping gait, was holding some small implement over the furnace, while Joseph, on his knees, was puffing away at the fire with a small pair of bellows.—To anticipate for a moment. How little did E—— or I imagine, that this was very nearly the *last time* of his ever again entering the scene of his long and useful scientific labours!

I was utterly astonished to see one whose sufferings over night had been so dreadful, quietly pursuing his avocations in the morning, as though nothing had happened to him!

“Excuse my shaking hands with you for the present, Doctor,” said E——, looking at me through a huge pair of tortoise-shell spectacles, “for both hands are engaged, you see. My friend, Dr ——, has just sent me a piece of platina, and you see I’m already playing pranks with it! Really, I’m as eager to spoil a plaything, to see what my rattle’s made of, as any philosophical child in the kingdom! Here I am analyzing, dissolving, transmuting, and so on.—But I’ve really an important end in view here, trying a new combination of metal, and Dr —— is anxious to know if the result of my process corresponds with *his*.—Now, now, Joseph,” said E——, breaking off suddenly, “it is ready; bring the”——At this critical instant, by some unlucky accident, poor Joseph suddenly overthrew the whole apparatus—and the compounds, ashes, fragments, &c. were spilled on the

floor! Really, I quite lost my own temper with thinking of the vexatious disappointment it would be to E——. Not so, however, with him.

"Oh, dear—dear, dear me! Well, here's an end of our day's work before we thought for it! How did you do it, Joseph, eh?" said E——, with an air of chagrin, but with perfect mildness of tone. What a ludicrous contrast between the philosopher and his assistant! The latter, an obese little fellow, with a droll cast of one eye, was quite red in the face, and, wringing his hands, exclaimed—"O Lord—O Lord—O Lord! what *could* I have been doing, master?"

"Why, that's surely *your* concern more than mine," replied E——, smiling at me. "Come, come, it can't be helped—you've done yourself more harm than me—by giving Dr —— such a specimen of your awkwardness as *I* have not seen for many a month. See and set things to rights as soon as possible," said E——, calmly putting away his spectacles.

"Well, Dr ——, what do you think of my little workshop?" he continued, addressing me, who still stood with my hat and gloves on—surprised and delighted to see that his temper had stood this trial, and that such a provoking *contre-temps* had really not at all ruffled him. From the position in which he stood, the light fell strongly on his face, and I saw his features more distinctly than heretofore. I noticed that sure index of a thinking countenance—three strong perpendicular marks or folds between the eyebrows, at right angles with the deep wrinkles that furrowed his forehead, and then the "untroubled lustre" of his cold, clear, full, blue eyes, rich and serene as that

—— through whose clear medium the great sun
Loveth to shoot his beams, all bright'ning, all
Turning to gold.

Reader, when you see a face of this stamp, so marked, and with such eyes and forehead, rest assured you are looking at a gifted, if not an extraordinary man.

The lower features were somewhat shrunk and sallow—as well they might, if only from a thousand hours of agony, setting aside the constant wearing of his “ever waking mind;” yet a smile of cheerfulness—call it rather resignation—irradiated his pale countenance, like twilight on a sepulchre. He showed me round his laboratory, which was kept in most exemplary cleanliness and order; and then, opening a door, we entered the “sanctum sanctorum”—his study. It had not more, I should think, than five or six hundred books; but all of them—in plain substantial bindings—had manifestly seen good service. Immediately beneath the window stood several portions of a splendid astronomical apparatus—a very large telescope, in exquisite order—a recently invented instrument for calculating the parallaxes of the fixed stars—a chronometer of his own construction, &c. “Do you see this piece of furniture?” he enquired, directing my attention to a sort of sideless sofa, or broad inclined plane, stuffed, the extremity turned up, to rest the feet against—and being at an angle of about forty-five degrees with the floor. “Ah! could that thing speak, it might tell a tale of my tortures, such as no living being may! For, when I feel my daily paroxysms coming on me, if I am any where near my study, I lay my wearied limbs here, and continue till I find relief!” This put conversation into the very train I wished. I begged him to

favour me with a description of his disease ; and he sat down and complied. I recollect him comparing the pain to that which might be supposed to follow the incessant stinging of a wasp at the spinal marrow—sudden lancinating, accompanied by quivering sensations throughout the whole nervous system—followed by a strange sense of numbness. He said that at other times, it was as though some one were in the act of drilling a hole through his backbone, and piercing the marrow ! Sometimes, during the moments of his most ecstatic agonies, he felt as though his backbone were rent asunder all the way up. The pain was, on the whole, *local*—confined to the first of the lumbar vertebræ ; but occasionally fluctuating between them and the dorsal.

When he had finished the dreary details of his disease, I was obliged to acknowledge, with a sigh, that nothing suggested itself to me as a remedy, but what I understood from Dr D—— had been tried over and over, and over again. “ You are right,” he replied, sorrowfully. “ Dreadful as are my sufferings, the bare thought of undergoing more medical or surgical treatment, makes me shudder. My back is already frightfully disfigured with the searings of caustic, seton-marks, cupping, and blistering ; and I hope God will give me patience to wait till these perpetual knockings, as it were, shall have at length battered down this frail structure.”

“ Mr E——, you rival some of the old martyrs !” I faltered, grasping his hand as we rose to leave the study.

“ In point of bodily suffering, I may ; but their *holiness* ! Those who are put into the keenest parts—the very heart of the ‘ fiery furnace’—will come out most refined at last !”

“ Well, you may be earning a glorious reward hereafter, for your constancy”——

“ Or I may be merely smarting for the sins of my forefathers !” exclaimed E——, mournfully.

Monday, July 18—. Having been summoned to a patient in the neighbourhood of E——, I took that opportunity of calling upon him on my return. It was about nine o'clock in the evening ; and I found the philosopher sitting pensively in the parlour alone ; for his niece, I learned, had retired early, owing to indisposition. A peculiar sinumbra lamp, of his own contrivance, stood on the table, which was strewn with books, pamphlets, and papers. He received me with his usual gentle affability.

“ I don't know how it is, but I feel in a singular mood of mind to-night,” said he : “ I ought to say rather *many* moods : sometimes so suddenly and strongly excited, as to lose the control over my emotions—at others sinking into the depths of despondency. I've been trying for these two hours to glance over this *New View of the Neptunian Theory*,” pointing to an open book on the table, “ which —— has sent me, to review for him in the —— ; but 'tis useless ; I cannot command my thoughts.” I felt his pulse : it was one of the most irregular I had ever known. “ I know what you suspect,” said he, observing my eyes fixed with a puzzled air on my watch, and my finger at his wrist, for several minutes ; “ some organic mischief at the heart. Several of your fraternity have latterly comforted me with assurances to that effect.” I assured him I did not apprehend any thing of the kind, but merely that his circulation was a little disturbed by recent excitement.

"True—true," he replied, "I *am* a little flustered, as the phrase is"—

"Oh!—here's the secret, I suppose?" said I, reaching to a periodical publication of the month lying on the table, and in which I had, a few days ago, read a somewhat virulent attack on him. "You're very rudely handled here, I think?" said I.

"What! do you think *that* has discomposed me?" he enquired with a smile. "No, no—I'm past feeling these things long ago! Abuse—mere personality—now excites in me no emotion of any kind!"

"Why, Mr E——, surely you are not indifferent to the opinion of the public, which may be misled by such things as these, if suffered to go unanswered?"

"I am not afraid of that. If I've done any thing good in my time, as I have honestly tried to do, sensible people won't believe me an impostor, at any man's bidding. Those who *would* be so influenced, are hardly worth undeceiving."†

* * "There's a good deal of acuteness in the paper; and, in one particular, the reviewer has fairly caught me tripping. He may *laugh* at me as much as he pleases; but why go about to put himself in a passion? The

† "This gentleman's speculations have long served to amuse children and old people: now that he has become old himself, he also may hope for amusement from them."—"This mountain has so long brought forth mice, that, now it has become enfeebled and worn out, it may amuse itself with looking after its progeny."—"Chimeras of a diseased brain."—"Quackery."——*Review*,‡ [neither the *Edinburgh* nor *Quarterly*.] *Mr E*—— *knew who was the writer of this article.*

‡ The French Translator volunteers to assign in a note, "*Le New Monthly Magazine*," as the one alluded to, and from which these quotations are made, though I distinctly stated it to be one of *the Reviews*.

subject did not require it. But if he is in a passion, should I not be foolish to be in one too?—Passion serves only to put out truth; and no one would indulge it that had truth only in view. * * The real occasion of my nervousness,” he continued, “is far different from what you have supposed—a little incident which occurred only this evening; and I will tell it you.

“My niece, feeling poorly with a cold, retired to bed as soon as she had done tea; and, after sitting here about a quarter of an hour, I took one of the candles, and walked to the laboratory, to see whether all was right—as is my custom every evening. On opening the door, to my very great amazement, I saw a stranger in it; a gentleman in dark-coloured clothes, holding a dim taper in one hand, and engaged in going round the room, apparently putting all my instruments in order. I stood at the door almost petrified, watching his movements without thinking of interrupting them, for a sudden feeling of something like awe crept over me. He made no noise whatever, and did not seem aware that any one was looking at him—or if he was, he did not seem disposed to notice the interruption. I saw him as clearly, and what he was doing, as I now see you playing with your gloves! He was engaged leisurely putting away all my loose implements; shutting boxes, cases, and cupboards, with the accuracy of one who was perfectly well acquainted with his work. Having thus disposed of all the instruments and apparatus which had been used to-day—and we have had very many more than usual out—he opened the inner-door leading to the study, and entered—I following in mute astonishment. He went to work the same way in the study; shutting up several

volumes that lay open on the table, and carefully replacing them in their proper places on the shelves.

“ Having cleared away these, he approached the astronomical apparatus near the window, put the cap on the object-end of the telescope, pushed in the joints all noiselessly, closed up in its case my new chronometer, and then returned to the table where my desk lay, took up the inkstand, poured out the ink into the fire-place, flung all the pens under the grate, and then shut the desk, locked it, and laid the key on the top of it. When he had done all this, he walked towards the wall, and turned slowly towards me, looked me full in the face, and shook his head mournfully. The taper he held in his hand slowly expired, and the spectre, if such it were, disappeared. The strangest part of the story is yet to follow. The pale, fixed features seemed perfectly *familiar* to me—they were those which I had often gazed at, in a portrait of Mr Boyle, prefixed to my quarto copy of his *Treatise of Atmospheric Air*. As soon as I had a little recovered my self-possession, I took down the work in question, and examined the portrait. I was right!—I cannot account for my not having spoken to the figure, or gone close up to it. I think I could have done either, as far as *courage* went. My prevailing idea was, that a single word would have dissolved the charm, and my curiosity prompted me to see it out. I returned to the parlour, and rang the bell for Joseph.

“ ‘ Joseph,’ said I, ‘ have you set things to rights in the laboratory and study to-night?’—‘ Yes, master,’ he replied, with surprise in his manner; ‘ I finished it before tea-time, and set things in *particular* good order—I gave both the rooms a right good cleaning out—I’m sure there’s not every pin in its wrong place.’

“ ‘ What made you fling the pens and ink in the fire-place and under the grate ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Because I thought they were of no use—the pens worn to stumps, and the ink thick and clotted—too much *gum* in it.’ He was evidently astonished at being asked such questions, and was going to explain further, when I said simply, ‘ That will do,’ and he retired. Now, what am I to think of all this ? If it were a mere ocular spectrum, clothed with its functions from my own excited fancy, there was yet a unity of purpose in its doings that is extraordinary ! Something very much like ‘ *shutting up the shop* ’—eh ? ” enquired E——, with a melancholy smile.

“ ‘Tis touching—very ! I never heard of a more singular incident,” I replied, abstractedly, without removing my eyes from the fire ; for *my* reading of the occurrence was a sudden and strong conviction, that, ghost or no ghost, E—— had toiled his *last* in the behalf of science—that he would never again have occasion to use his philosophical machinery ! This melancholy presentiment invested E——, and all he said or did, with tenfold interest in my eyes. “ Don’t suppose, Doctor, that I am weak enough to be seriously disturbed by the occurrence I have just been mentioning. Whether or not it really portends my approaching death, I know not. Though I am not presumptuous enough to suppose myself so important as to warrant any special interference of Providence on my behalf, yet I cannot help thinking I am to look on this as a warning—a solemn premonition—that I may ‘ set my house in order, and die.’ ” Our conversation, during the remainder of our interview, turned on the topic suggested by the affecting incident just related. I listened to all he uttered, as to the words

of a doomed—a dying man ! What E—— advanced on this difficult and interesting subject, was marked not less by sound philosophy, than unfeigned piety. He ended with avowing his belief, that the Omnipotent Being, who formed both the body and the soul, and willed them to exist unitedly, could surely, nevertheless, if he saw good, cause the one to exist separately from the other ; either by endowing it with *new properties* for that special purpose, or by enabling it to exercise, in its disembodied state, those powers which continued *latent* in it during its connexion with the body. Did it follow, he asked, that neither body nor soul possessed any *other qualities* than those which were necessary to enable them to exist together ? Why should the soul be incapable of a substantially distinct personal existence ? Where the *impossibility* of its being made visible to organs of sense ? Has the Almighty no means of bringing this to pass ? Are there no latent properties in the organs of vision—no subtle *sympathies* with immaterial substances—which are yet undiscovered, and even undiscoverable ? Surely this *may* be the case—though *how*, it would be impossible to conjecture. He saw no bad philosophy, he said, in this ; and he who decided the question in the negative, before he had brought forward some evidence of its moral or physical *impossibility*, was guilty of most presumptuous dogmatism.

This is the substance of his opinions ; but, alas ! I lack the chaste, nervous, philosophical eloquence in which they were clothed. A distinguished living character said of E——, that he was the most fascinating talker on abstruse subjects he ever heard. I could have staid all night listening to him. In fact, I fear I *did* trespass on his politeness even to inconvenience. I staid and

partook of his supper—simple frugal fare—consisting of roast potatoes, and two tumblers of new milk. I left about eleven; my mind occupied but with one wish all the way home—that I had known E—— intimately for as many *years* as hours!

Two days afterwards, the following hurried note was put into my hands, from my friend Dr D——: —“ My dear ——, I am sure you will be as much afflicted as I was, at hearing that our inestimable friend, Mr E——, had a sudden stroke of the palsy this afternoon, about two o’clock, from which I very much fear he may never recover; for this, added to his advanced age, and the dreadful chronic complaint under which he labours, is surely sufficient to shatter the small remains of his strength. I need hardly say, that all is in confusion at ——. I am going down there to-night, and shall be happy to drive you down also, if you will be at my house by seven. Yours, &c.”—I was grieved and agitated, but in nowise surprised at this intelligence. What passed the last time I saw him, prepared me for something of this kind.

On arriving in the evening, we were shown into the parlour, where sat Miss E——, in a paroxysm of hysterical weeping, which had forced her, a few moment’s before, to leave her uncle’s sick-room. It was some time before we could calm her agitated spirits, or get her to give us any thing like a connected account of her uncle’s sudden illness. “ Oh, these will tell you all!” said she, sobbing, and taking two letters from her bosom, one of which bore a black seal: “ it is these cruel letters that have broken his heart! Both came by the same post this morning!” She withdrew, promising to send for

us when all was ready, and we hastily opened the two letters she had left. What will the reader suppose were the two heavy strokes dealt at once upon the head of Mr E—— by an inscrutable Providence? The letter I opened, conveyed the intelligence of the sudden death, in childbed, of Mrs ——, his only daughter, to whom he had been most passionately attached. The letter Dr D—— held in his hand, disclosed an instance of almost unparalleled perfidy and ingratitude. I shall here state what I learned afterwards—that, many years ago, Mr E—— had taken a poor lad from one of the parish schools,* pleased with his quickness and obedience, and had apprenticed him to a respectable tradesman. He served his articles honourably, and Mr E—— nobly advanced him funds to establish himself in business. He prospered beyond every one's expectations: and the good, generous, confiding E——, was so delighted with his conduct, and persuaded of his principles, that he gradually advanced him large sums of money to increase an extensive connexion; and, at last, invested his *all*, amounting to little short of £15,000, in this man's concern, for which he received five per cent. Sudden success, however, turned this young man's head; and Mr E—— had long been uneasy at hearing current rumours about his protégé's unsteadiness and extravagance. He had several times spoken to him about them; but was easily persuaded that the reports in question were as groundless as malignant. And as the last half-year's

* “*Enfans trouvés, enfans de pauvres. On peut se charger d'eux en payant une somme à la paroisse qui vous le livre. Cette coutume a dégénéré d'une manière horrible, et, dans certains cantons d'Angleterre, elle est devenue un véritable marché de chair humaine.*”—*Note of the French Translator.*

interest was paid punctually, accompanied with a hint, that, if doubts were entertained of his probity, the man was ready to refund a great part of the *principal*, Mr E——'s confidence revived. Now, the letter in question was from this person ; and stated, that, though "circumstances" had compelled him to withdraw from his creditors for the present—in other words, to abscond—he had no doubt that, if Mr E—— would wait a little, he should in time, be able to pay him "a fair dividend!"

"Good God! why, E—— is *ruined*!" exclaimed Dr D——, turning pale, and dropping the letter, after having read it to me. "Yes, ruined!—all the hard savings of many years' labour and economy, *gone* at a stroke!"

"Why, was *all* his small fortune embarked in this man's concern?"

"All, except a few hundreds lying loose at his banker's!—What is to become of poor Miss E——?"

"Cannot this infamous scoundrel be brought to justice?" I enquired.

"If he were, he may prove, perhaps, not worth powder and shot, the viper!"

Similar emotions kept us both silent for several moments.

"This will put his philosophy to a dreadful trial," said I. "How do you think he will bear it, should he recover from the present seizure so far as to be made sensible of the extent of his misfortunes?"

"Oh, nobly, nobly! I'll pledge my existence to it! He'll bear it like a Christian as well as a philosopher! I've seen him in trouble before this."

"Is Miss E—— entirely dependent on her uncle; and has he made no provision for her?"

“Alas! he had appropriated to her £5000 of the £15,000 in this man’s hands, as a marriage portion—I know it, for I am one of his executors. The circumstance of leaving her thus destitute will, I know, prey cruelly on his mind.”—Shortly afterwards, we were summoned into the chamber of the venerable sufferer. His niece sat at the bedside, near his head, holding one of his cold motionless hands in hers. Mr E——’s face, deadly pale, and damp with perspiration, had suffered a shocking distortion of the features—the left eye and the mouth being drawn downwards to the left side. He gazed at us vacantly, evidently without recognising us, as we took our stations, one at the foot, the other at the side of the bed. What a melancholy contrast between the present expression of his eyes, and that of acuteness and brilliance which eminently characterised them in health! They reminded me of Milton’s sun, looking

————— through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of its beams.

The distorted lips were moving about incessantly, as though with abortive efforts to speak, though he could utter nothing but an inarticulate murmuring sound, which he had continued almost from the moment of his being struck. Was it not a piteous—a heart-rending spectacle? Was *this* the PHILOSOPHER!

After making due enquiries, and ascertaining the extent of the injury to his nervous system, we withdrew to consult on the treatment to be adopted. I considered that the uncommon quantities of laudanum he had so long been in the habit of receiving into his system, alone sufficiently accounted for his present seizure. Then, again, the disease in his spine—the consequent

exhaustion of his energies—the sedentary, thoughtful life he led—all these were at least predisposing causes. The sudden shock he had received in the morning merely *accelerated* what had long been advancing on him. We both anticipated a speedy fatal issue, and resolved to take the earliest opportunity of acquainting him with his approaching end.

[He lies in nearly the same state during Thursday and Friday.]

Saturday.—We are both astonished and delighted to find that E——'s daily paroxysms have deserted him, at least he has exhibited no symptoms of their appearance up to this day. On entering the room, we found, to our inexpressible satisfaction, that his disorder had taken a very unusual and happy course—having been worked out of the system by *fever*. This, as my medical readers will be aware, is a very rare occurrence.—[Three or four pages of the Diary are occupied with technical details, of no interest whatever to the general reader.]—His features were soon restored to their natural position, and, in short, every appearance of palsy left him.

Sunday evening.—Mr E—— going on well, and his mental energies and speech perfectly restored. I called on him alone. Almost his first words to me were—“Well, Doctor, good Mr Boyle was right, you see?” I replied, that it yet remained to be proved.

“God sent me a noble messenger to summon me hence, did he not? One whose character has always been my model, as far as I could imitate his great and good qualities.”

“You attach too much weight, Mr E——, to that creature of imagination.”

“What ! do you really doubt that I am on my death-bed ? I assuredly shall not recover. The pains in my back have left me, that my end may be easy. Ay, ay, the ‘silver cord is loosed.’” I enquired about the sudden cessation of his chronic complaint. He said it had totally disappeared, leaving behind it only a sensation of numbness. “In this instance of His mercy towards an unworthy worm of the earth, I devoutly thank my Father—my God !” he exclaimed, looking reverentially upward.—“Oh, how could I, in patience, have possessed my soul, if, to the pains of dying, had been superadded those which have embittered life !—My constant prayer to God has been, that, if it be His will, my life may run out clear to the last drop ; and, though the stream has been a little troubled”—alluding to the intelligence which had occasioned his illness—“I may yet have my prayer answered.—Oh, sweet darling Anne ! why should I grieve for *you* ? Where I am going, I humbly believe you are ! Root and branch—both gathered home !” He shed tears abundantly, but spoke of the dreadful bereavement in terms of perfect resignation. * * *

“You are, no doubt, acquainted,” he continued, “with the other afflicting news, which, I own, has cut me to the quick ! My confidence has been betrayed—my sweet niece’s prospects utterly blighted—and I made a beggar of in my old age. This ungrateful man has squandered away infamously the careful savings of more than thirty years—every penny of which has been earned with the sweat of my brow. I do not so much care for it myself, as I have still enough left to preserve me from want during the few remaining days I have left me ; but my poor dear Emma ! My heart aches to think of it !”

“I hope you may yet recover *some* portion of your property, Mr E——; the man speaks in his letter of paying you a fair dividend.”

“No, no—when once a man has deliberately acted in such an unprincipled manner as he has, it is foolish to expect restitution. Loss of character and the confidence of his benefactor, makes him desperate. I find that, should I linger on earth longer than a few weeks, I cannot now afford to pay the rent of this house—I must remove from it—I cannot die in the house in which my poor wife breathed her last—this very room!” His tears burst forth again, and mine started to my eyes. “A friend is now looking out lodgings for me in the neighbourhood, to which I shall remove the instant my health will permit. It goes to my heart, to think of the bustling auctioneer disposing of all my apparatus”—tears again gushed from his eyes—“the companions of many years”——

“Dear, dear sir!—Your friends will ransack heaven and earth before your fears shall be verified,” said I, with emotion.

“They—you—are very good—but you would be unsuccessful!—You must think me very weak to let these things overcome me in this way—one can’t help feeling them!—A man may writhe under the amputating knife, and yet acknowledge the necessity of its use! My spirit wants disciplining.”

“Allow me to say, Mr E——, that I think you bear your misfortunes with admirable fortitude—true philosophic”——

“Oh, Doctor! Doctor!” he exclaimed, interrupting me, with solemn emphasis—“believe a dying man, to

whom all this world's fancied realities have sunk into shadows—*nothing* can make a deathbed easy, but RELIGION—a humble, hearty faith in Him, whose Son redeemed mankind ! Philosophy—science—is a nothing—a mockery—a delusion—if it be only of this world ! I believe from the bottom of my heart, and have long done so, that the essence—the very crown and glory of true philosophy, is to surrender up the soul entirely to God's teaching, and practically receive and appreciate the consolations of the gospel of Jesus Christ !” Oh, the fervency with which he expressed himself—his shrunk clasped hands pointed upwards, and his features beaming with devotion ! I told him it did my heart good to hear such opinions avowed by a man of his distinguished attainments.

“ Don't—don't—don't talk in that strain, Doctor !” said he, turning to me with a reproving air. “ Could a living man but know how compliments pall upon a dying man's ear ! * * * * I am going shortly into the presence of Him who is Wisdom itself ; and shall I go pluming myself on my infinitely less than glow-worm glimmer, into the presence of that pure Effulgence ? Doctor, I've felt, latterly, that I would give worlds to forget the pitiful acquirements which I have purchased by a life's labour, if my soul might meet a smile of approbation when it first flits into the presence of its Maker—its Judge !” Strange language ! thought I, for the scientific E——, confessedly a master-mind among men ! Would that the shoal of sciolists, now babbling abroad their infidel crudities, could have had one moment's interview with this dying philosopher ! Pert fools, who are hardly released from their leading-strings—the very

go-cart, as it were, of elemental science—before they strut about, and forthwith proceed to pluck their MAKER by the beard—and this, as an evidence of their “independence,” and being released from the “trammels of superstition !”

O Lord and Maker of the universe !—That thou shouldst be so “long-suffering” towards these insolent insects of an hour !

To return : I left E—— in a glowing mood of mind, disposed to envy him his deathbed, even with all the ills which attended it ! Before leaving the house I stepped into the parlour to speak a few words to Miss E——. The sudden illness of her uncle had found its way into the papers ; and I was delighted to find it had brought a profusion of cards every morning, many of them bearing the most distinguished names in rank and science. It showed that E——’s worth was properly appreciated. I counted the cards of five noblemen, and very many members of the Royal, and other learned Societies.

Wednesday, 15th August.—Well, poor E—— was yesterday removed from his house in —— Row, where he had resided upwards of twenty-five years—which he had fitted up, working often with his own hands, at much trouble and expense—having built the laboratory-room since he had the house : he was removed, I say, from his house, to lodgings in the neighbourhood. He has three rooms on the first floor, small indeed, and in humble style—but perfectly clean, neat, and comfortable. Was not this itself sufficient to have broken many a haughty spirit ? His extensive philosophical apparatus, furniture, &c. had *all been sold*, at less than a *twentieth* part of the

sum they had originally cost him ! No tidings as yet have been received of the villain who has ruined his generous patron. E—— has ceased, however, to talk of it ; but I see that Miss E—— feels it acutely. Poor girl, well she may ! Her uncle was carried in a sedan to his new residence, and fainted on the way, but has continued in tolerable spirits since his arrival. His conduct is the admiration of all that see or hear of him ! The first words he uttered, as he was sitting before the fire in an easy-chair, after recovering a little from the exhaustion occasioned by his being carried up stairs, were to Dr D——, who had accompanied him. “ Well ! ” he whispered faintly, with his eyes shut—“ What a gradation ! —Reached the *halfway-house* between —— Row and the ‘house appointed for all living !’ ”

“ You have much to bear, sir ! ” said Dr D——. “ And more to be thankful for ! ” replied E——. “ If there was such a thing as a Protestant *Calendar*,” said Dr D—— to me, enthusiastically, while recounting what is told above, “ and I could canonize, E—— should stand first on the list, and be my patron saint ! ” When I saw E——, he was lying in bed, in a very low and weak state, evidently declining rapidly. Still he looked as placid as his fallen features would let him.

“ Doctor,” said he, soon after I had sat down, “ how very good it is of you to come so far out of your regular route to see me ! ”

“ Don’t name it,” said I ; “ proud and happy ”——

“ But, excuse me, I wish to tell you that, when I am gone, you will find I knew how to be grateful, as far as my means would warrant.”

“ Mr E—— ! my dear sir ! ” said I, as firmly as my

emotions could let me, “if you don’t promise, this day, to erase every mention of my name or services from your will, I leave you, and solemnly declare I will never intrude upon you again! Mr E——, you distress me—you do, beyond measure!”

“Well—well—well—I’ll obey you—but may God bless you! God bless you!” he replied, turning his head away, while the tears trickled down. Indeed! as if a thousand guineas could have purchased the emotions with which I felt his poor damp fingers feebly compressing my hand!

* * * * *

“Doctor!” he exclaimed, after I had been sitting with him some time, conversing on various subjects connected with his illness and worldly circumstances—“don’t you think God can speak to the soul as well in a night as a day dream? Shall I presume to say he has done so in my case?” I asked him what he was alluding to.

“Don’t you recollect my telling you of an optical, or spectral illusion, which occurred to me at —— Row? A man shutting up the shop—you know?” I told him I did.

“Well—last night I *dreamed*—I am satisfied it was a dream—that I saw Mr Boyle again; but how different! Instead of gloomy clothing, his appearance was wondrously radiant; and his features were not, as before, solemn, sad, and fixed, but wore an air of joy and exultation; and, instead of a miserable expiring taper, he held aloft a light like the kindling lustre of a star! What think you of that, Doctor? Surely, if both these are the delusions of a morbid fancy—if they are, what a light they fling over the ‘dark valley’ I am entering!”

I hinted my dissent from the sceptical sneers of the day, which would resolve all that was uttered on death-beds into delirious rant—confused, disordered faculties—superstition.

“ I think you are right,” said he. “ Who knows what new light may stream upon the soul, as the wall between time and eternity is breaking down? Who has come back from the grave to tell us that the soul’s energies decay with the body, or that the body’s decay destroys or interrupts the exercise of the soul’s powers, and that all a dying man utters is mere gibberish? The *Christian* philosopher would be loath to do so, when he recollects that God chose *the hour of death* to reveal futurity to the patriarchs, and others, of old! Do you think a superintending Providence would allow the most solemn and instructive period of our life, the close—scenes where men’s hearts and eyes are open, if ever, to receive admonition and encouragement—to be mere exhibitions of absurdity and weakness? Is that the way God treats his servants?”

Friday afternoon.—In a more melancholy mood than usual, on account of the evident distress of his niece about her altered prospects. He told me, however, that he felt the confidence of his soul in no wise shaken. “ I am,” said he, “ like one lying far on the shores of Eternity, thrown there by the waters of the world, and whom a high and strong wave reaches once more and overflows. One may be pardoned a sudden chillness and heart-fluttering.—After all,” he continued, “ only consider what an easy end mine is, comparatively with that of many others! How very—very thankful should I be for such

an easy exit as mine seems likely to be ! God be thanked that I have to endure no such agonies of horror and remorse as —— !” (alluding to Mr ——, whom I was then attending, and whose case I had mentioned on a former occasion to Mr E——, the one described in a former part of this Diary, under the title—*A man about Town*)—“that I am writhing under no accident—that I have not to struggle with utter destitution ! Why am I not left to perish in a prison ?—to suffer on a scaffold ?—to be plucked suddenly into the presence of my Maker in battle,* ‘with all my sins upon my head ?’ Suppose I were grovelling in the hopeless darkness of scepticism or infidelity ? Suppose I were still to endure the agonies arising from disease in my spine ?—O God !” exclaimed Mr E——, “give me a more humble and grateful heart !”

Monday, 19th September.—Mr E—— is still alive, to the equal astonishment of Dr D—— and myself. The secret must lie, I think, in his tranquil frame of mind. He is as happy as the day is long ! Oh ! that my latter days may be like his ! I was listening, with feelings of delight unutterable, to E——’s description of the state of his mind—the perfect peace he felt towards all mankind, and his humble and strong hopes of happiness hereafter—when the landlady of the house knocked at the door, and, on entering, told Mr E—— that a person was down stairs very anxious to see him. “Who is it ?” enquired E——. She did not know. “Has he ever been here before ?”—“No ;” but she thought she had several times seen him about the neighbourhood.—“What sort

* This was at the time of the Peninsular Campaign.

of a person is he ?” enquired E——, with a surprised air. —“ Oh, he is a tall pale man, in a brown great-coat.” E—— requested her to go down and ask his name. She returned and said, “ Mr H——, sir.”—E——, on hearing her utter the word, suddenly raised himself in bed; the little colour he had fled from his cheeks: he lifted up his hands and exclaimed—“ What can the unhappy man want with me ? ” He paused thoughtfully for a few moments. “ You’re, of course, aware who this is ? ” he enquired of me in a whisper. I nodded. “ Show him up stairs,” said he; and the woman withdrew. I helped hastily to remove him from his bed to an arm-chair near the fire. “ For your own sake,” said I, hurriedly—“ I beg you to be calm; don’t allow your feelings ”—— I was interrupted by the door opening, and just such a person as Mrs —— had described entered, with a slow hesitating step, into the room. He held his hat squeezed in both his hands, and he stood for a few moments motionless, just within the door, with his eyes fixed on the floor. In that posture he continued till Mrs —— had retired, shutting the door after her, when he turned suddenly towards the easy-chair by the fire, in which Mr E—— was sitting, much agitated—approached, and, falling down on his knees, covered his eyes with his hands, through which the tears presently fell like rain; and, after many sobs and sighs, he faltered, “ Oh, Mr E—— ! ”

“ What do you want with ME, Mr H—— ? ” enquired Mr E——, in a low tone, but very calmly.

“ Oh! kind, good, abused sir! I have behaved like a villain to you ”——

“ Mr H——, I beg you will not distress me; consider I am in a very poor and weak state.”

"Don't, for God's sake, speak so coldly, sir. I am heartbroken to think how shamefully I have used you!"

"Well, then, strive to amend"——

"Oh, dear, good Mr E——! can you forgive me?" Mr E—— did not answer. I saw he *could* not. The tears were nearly overflowing. The man seized his hand, and pressed it to his lips with fervency.

"Rise, Mr H——, rise! I *do* forgive you, and I hope that God will! Seek His forgiveness, which will avail you more than *mine*!"

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed the man, again covering his eyes with his hands—"How very—VERY ill you look—how pale and thin!—It's *I* that have done it all—I, the d——dest"——

"Hush, hush, sir!" exclaimed Mr E——, with more sternness than I had ever seen him exhibit, "do not curse in a dying man's room."

"Dying—dying—*dying*, sir!" exclaimed the man, hoarsely, staring horror-struck at Mr E——, and retiring a step from him.

"Yes, James," replied E——, mildly, calling him for the first time by his Christian name, "I am assuredly dying—but not through *you*, or any thing you have done. Come, come, don't distress yourself unnecessarily," he continued in the kindest tones; for he saw the man continued deadly pale, speechless, and clasping his hands convulsively over his breast—"Consider, James, the death of my daughter, Mrs ——."

"Oh no, no, no, sir—no! It's *I* that have done it all; my ingratitude has broken your heart—I know it has!—What will become of me?"——the man resumed, still staring vacantly at Mr E——.

“James, I must not be agitated in this way—it destroys me—you must leave the room, unless you can become calm. What is done, *is* done; and if you really repent of it”——

“Oh! I do, sir; and could almost weep tears of blood for it! But, indeed, sir, it has been as much my misfortune as my fault.”

“Was it your *misfortune*, or your fault, that you kept that infamous woman on whom you have squandered so much of your property—of *mine* rather?” enquired Mr E——, with a mild, expostulating air. The man suddenly blushed scarlet, and continued silent.

“It is right I should tell you that it is *your* misconduct which has turned me out in my old age, from the house which has sheltered me all my life, and driven me to die in this poor place! You have beggared my niece, and robbed me of all the hard earnings of my life—wrung from the sweat of my brow, as you well know, James. How could your heart let you do all this?” The man made him no answer. “I am not *angry* with you—that is past; but I am grieved—disappointed—shocked—to find my confidence in you has been so much abused.”

“Oh, sir, I don’t know what it was that infatuated me: but—never trust a living man again, sir—never,” replied the man vehemently.

“It is not likely that I shall, James—I shall not have the opportunity,” said Mr E——, calmly. The man’s eye continued fixed on Mr E——, his lip quivered in spite of his violent compression, and the fluctuating colour in his cheeks showed the agitation he was suffering.

“Do you forgive me, sir, for what I have done?” he asked, almost inaudibly.

“ Yes—if you promise to amend—yes ! Here is my hand—I do forgive you, as I hope for my own forgiveness hereafter !” said Mr E——, reaching out his hand. “ And if your repentance is sincere, remember, should it ever be in your power, whom you have most heavily wronged—not *me*, but—but—Miss E——, my poor niece. If you *should* ever be able to make her any reparation”——the tears stood in Mr E——’s eyes, and his emotions prevented his completing the sentence. “ Really, you *must* leave me, James—you must—I am too weak to bear this scene any longer,” said E—— faintly, looking deadly pale.

“ You had better withdraw, sir, and call some other time,” said I. He rose, looking almost bewildered ; thrust his hand into his breastpocket, and taking out a small packet, laid it hurriedly on Mr E——’s lap—snatched his hand to his lips, and murmuring, “ Farewell, farewell, best—most injured of men !” withdrew. I watched him through the window ; and saw that, as soon as he had left the house, he set off, running almost at the top of his speed. When I returned to look at Mr E——, he had fainted. He had opened the packet, and a letter lay open in his lap, with a great many bank-notes. The letter ran as follows :—“ Injured and revered sir,*—When you read this epistle, the miserable writer will have fled from his country, and be on his way to America. He has abused the confidence of one of the greatest and best

* “ Vous que je vénère et que j’ai tant outragé”—says the French Translator ; adding, in an amusing note —“ *Revered and much injured sir.* Cette expression pathétique et simple n’a point de corrélatif en Français—*Révééré et tres-offensé monsieur,*” &c.

of men, but hopes the enclosed sum will show he repented what he had done! If it is ever in his power he will do more. J—— H——.” The packet contained bank-notes to the amount of £3000. When E—— had recovered from his swoon, I had him conveyed to bed, where he lay in a state of great exhaustion. He scarcely spoke a syllable during the time I continued with him.

Tuesday.—Mr E—— still suffers from the effects of yesterday’s excitement. It has, I am confident, hurried him far on his journey to the grave. He told me he had been turning over the affair in his mind, and considered that it would be wrong in him to retain the £3000, as it would be illegal, and a fraud on H——’s other creditors; and this upright man had actually sent in the morning for the solicitor to the bankrupt’s assignees, and put the whole into his hands, telling him of the circumstances under which he had received it, and asking him whether he should not be wrong in keeping it. The lawyer told him that he might perhaps be legally, but not morally wrong, as the law certainly forbade such payments; and yet he was by very far the largest creditor. “Let me act rightly then,” said Mr E——, “in the sight of God and man! Take the money and let me come in with the rest of the creditors.” Mr —— withdrew. He must have seen but seldom such an instance of noble conscientiousness! I remonstrated with Mr E——. “No, no, Doctor,” he replied; “I have endeavoured strictly to do my duty during life—I will not begin roguery on my deathbed!”

“Possibly you may not receive a penny in the pound, Mr E——” said I.

“ But I shall have the comfort of quitting life with a clear conscience ! ”

* * * *

Monday—(a week afterwards.)—The “ weary wheels of life ” will soon “ stand still ! ” All is calm and serene with E—— as a summer evening’s sunset ! He is at peace with all the world, and with his God. It is like entering the porch of Heaven, and listening to an angel, to visit and converse with E——. This morning he received the reward of his noble conduct in the matter of H——’s bankruptcy. The assignees have wound up the affairs, and found them not nearly so desperate as had been apprehended. The business was still to be carried on in H——’s name ; and the solicitor, who had been sent for by E—— to receive the £3000 in behalf of the assignees, called this morning with a cheque for £3500, and a highly complimentary letter from the assignees. They informed him that there was every prospect of the concern’s yet discharging the heavy amount of his claim, and that they would see to its being paid to whomsoever he might appoint. H—— had set sail for America the very day he had called on E——, and had left word that he should never return. E—— altered his will this evening, in the presence of myself and Dr D——. He left about £4000 to his niece, “ and whatever sums might be from time to time paid in from H——’s business ; ” five guineas for a yearly prize to the writer of the best summary of the progress of philosophy every year, in one of the Scotch colleges ; and ten pounds to be delivered every Christmas to ten poor men, as long as they lived, and who had already received the gratuity for several years ; “ and to J—— H——, my full and hearty for-

givenness, and prayers to God that he may return to a course of virtue and true piety, before it is too late."

* * * "How is it," said he, addressing Dr D—— and me, "that you have neither of you said any thing to me about examining my body after my decease?" Dr D—— replied, that he had often thought of asking his permission, but had kept delaying from day to day. "Why?" enquired E——, with a smile of surprise; "do you fancy I have any silly fears or prejudices on the subject—that I am anxious about the shell when the kernel is gone? I can assure you that it would rather give me pleasure than otherwise to think that, by an examination of my body, the cause of medical science might be advanced, and so I might minister a little to my species. I must, however, say you *NAY*; for I promised my poor wife that I would forbid it. *She* had prejudices, and I have a right to respect them."

Wednesday.—He looked much reduced this evening. I had hurried to his lodgings, to communicate what I considered would be the gratifying intelligence, that the highest prize of a foreign learned society had just been awarded him, for his work on ———, together with a fellowship. My hurried manner somewhat discomposed him; and before I had communicated my news, he asked, with some agitation, "What!—Some new misfortune?" When I had told him my errand—"Oh, bubble! bubble! bubble!" he exclaimed, shaking his head with a melancholy smile; "would I not give a thousand of these for a poor man's blessing? Are these, *these*, the trifles men toil through a life for?—Oh! if it had pleased God to give me a single glimpse of what I now see, thirty years

ago, how true an estimate I should have formed of the littleness—the vanity—of human applause! How much happier would my end have been! How much nearer should I have come to the character of a true philosopher—an impartial, independent, sincere searcher after truth, for its own sake!”

“But honours of this kind are of admirable service to science, Mr E——,” said I, “as supplying strong incentives and stimulants to a pursuit of philosophy.”

“Yes—but does it not argue a defect in the constitution of men’s minds to require them? What is the use of stimulants in medicine, Doctor? Don’t they presuppose a morbid sluggishness in the parts they are applied to? Do you ever stimulate a *healthy* organ?—So is it with the little honours and distinctions we are speaking of. Directly a man becomes *anxious* about obtaining them, his mind has lost its healthy tone—its sympathies with truth—with real philosophy.”

“Would you, then, discourage striving for them? Would you banish honours and prizes from the scientific world?”

“Assuredly—altogether—did we but exist in a better state of society than we do. * * What is the proper spirit in which, as matters at present stand, a philosopher should accept of honours?—Merely as evidences, testimonials, to the multitude of those who are *otherwise* incapable of appreciating his merits, and would set him down as a dreamer—a visionary—but that they saw the estimation in which he was held by those who are likely to canvass his claims strictly. They *compel* the deference, if not respect, of the *οἱ πολλοί*. A philosopher ought to receive them, therefore, as it were, in *self*

defence—a shut-mouth to babbling envious gainsayers. Were all the world philosophers, in the *true* sense of the word, not merely would honours be unnecessary, but an insult—a reproach. Directly a philosopher is conscious that the love of fame, the ambition to secure such distinctions, is gradually interweaving itself with the very texture of his mind—that such considerations are becoming *necessary in any degree* to prompt him to undertake or prosecute scientific pursuits—he may write ICHABOD on the door of his soul's temple, for the glory is departed. His motives are spurious, his fires false! To the exact extent of the necessity for such motives is, as it were, the pure ore of his soul adulterated. Minerva's jealous eyes can detect the slightest vacillation or inconsistency in her votaries, and discover her rival even before the votary himself is sensible of her existence; and withdraws from her faithless admirer in cold disdain, perhaps never to return.

“Do you think that Archimedes, Plato, or Sir Isaac Newton, would have cared a straw for even royal honours? The true test, believe me—the almost infallible criterion—of a man's having attained to real greatness of mind—to the true philosophic temper—is, his indifference to all sorts of honours and distinctions. Why—what seeks he—or, at least, professes to seek—but TRUTH? Is he to stop in the race, to look with Atalanta after the golden apples?

“He should *endure* honours, not go out of his way to seek them. If one apple hitch in his vest, he may carry it with him, not stop to dislodge it. Scientific distinctions are absolutely necessary in the present state of society, *because* it is defective. A mere ambitious struggle

for college honours, through rivalry, has induced many a man to enter so far upon philosophical studies, as that their charms, unfolding in proportion to his progress, have been, *of themselves*, at last sufficient to prevail upon him to go onwards—to love Science for *herself* alone. Honours make a man open his eyes, who would else have gone to his grave with them shut: and when once he has seen the divinity of truth, he laughs at obstacles, and follows it through evil and through good report—if his soul be properly constituted—if it have any of the nobler sympathies of our nature. That is my *homily on honours*,” said E——, with a faint smile. “I have not wilfully preached and practised different things, I assure you,” he continued, with a modest air; “but, through life, have striven to act upon these principles. Still, I never saw so clearly as at this moment how small my success has been—to what an extent I have been influenced by undue motives—as far as an overvaluing of the world’s honours may be so considered. *Now*, methinks, I see through no such magnifying medium; the mists and vapours are dispersing; and I begin to see that these objects are in themselves little, even to nothingness. The general retrospect of my life is far from satisfactory,” continued E——, with a sigh, “and fills me with real sorrow!”—“Why?” I enquired, with surprise. “Why, for this one reason—because I have, in a measure, sacrificed my *religion* to philosophy! Oh! will my Maker thus be put off with the mere lees—the refuse—of my time and energies? For *one hour* in the day that I have devoted to Him, have I not given twelve or fourteen to my own pursuits? What shall I say of this shortly—in a few hours—perhaps moments—when I stand suddenly

in the presence of God—when I see Him face to face ! Oh, Doctor, my heart sinks and sickens at the thought ! Shall I not be *speechless*, as one of old ? ”

I told him I thought he was unnecessarily severe with himself—that he “wrote bitter things against himself.”

“ I thought so once, nay all my life, myself, Doctor,” said he, solemnly—“but mark my words, as those of a dying man—you will think as I do now, when you come to be in my circumstances ! ”

The above, feebly conveyed perhaps to the reader, may be considered “THE LAST WORDS OF A PHILOSOPHER ! ” * They made an impression on my mind which has never been effaced ; and, I trust, never will. The reader need not suspect Mr E—— of “prosing.” The sentiments I have here endeavoured to record were uttered with no pompous pedantry of manner, but with the simplest, most modest air, and in the most silvery tones of voice I ever listened to. He often paused, from faintness ; and, at the conclusion, his voice grew almost inaudible, and he wiped the thick-standing dews from his forehead. He begged me in a low whisper, to kneel down, and read him one of the church prayers—the one appointed for those in prospect of death : I took down the prayer-book, and complied, though my emotions would not suffer me to speak in more than an often-interrupted whisper. He lay perfectly silent throughout with his clasped hands pointing upwards ; and, when I had concluded, he responded feebly but fervently, “ Amen—Amen ! ” and the tears gushed down his

* “ Les dernières paroles du philosophe furent consacrées à combattre ce système qui change l'arène scientifique en une arène de gladiateurs,” &c.—*French Translation.*

cheeks. My heart was melted within me. The silk cap had slipped from his head, and his long, loose, silvery hair streamed over his bed-dress: his appearance was that of a dying prophet of old !

I fear, however, that I am going on at too great length for the reader's patience, and must pause. For my own part, I could linger over the remembrances of these solemn scenes for ever: but I shall hasten on to the "last scene of all." It did not take place till near a fortnight after the interview above narrated. His manner during that time evinced no tumultuous ecstasies of soul; none of the boisterous extravagance of enthusiasm. His departure was like that of the sun, sinking gradually and finally, lower—lower—lower—no sudden upflashings—no quivering—no flickering unsteadiness about his fading rays !

Tuesday, 13th October.—Miss E—— sent word that her uncle appeared dying, and had expressed a wish to see both Dr D—— and me. I therefore despatched a note to Dr D——, requesting him to meet me at a certain place, and then hurried through my list of calls, so as to have finished by three o'clock. By four, we were both in the room of the dying philosopher. Miss E—— sat by his bedside, her eyes swollen with weeping, and was in the act of kissing her uncle's cheek when we entered. Mr F——, an exemplary clergyman, who had been one of E——'s earliest and dearest friends, sat at the foot of the bed, with a copy of Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*, from which he was reading in a low tone, at the request of E——. The appearance of the latter was very interesting. At his own instance, he had,

not long before, been shaved, washed, and had a change of linen ; and the bed was also but recently made, and was not at all tumbled or disordered. The mournful tolling of the church-bell for a funeral was also heard at intervals, and added to the solemnity of the scene. I have seldom felt in such a state of excitement as I was on first entering the room. He shook hands with each of us, or rather we shook his hands, for he could hardly lift them from the bed. " Well—thank you for coming to bid me farewell !" said he, with a smile ; adding presently, " Will you allow Mr F—— to proceed with what he is reading ? " Of course we nodded, and sat in silence listening. I watched E——'s features ; they were much wasted—but exhibited no traces of pain. His eye, though rather sunk in the socket, was full of the calmness and confidence of unwavering hope, and often directed upwards, with a devout expression. A most heavenly serenity was diffused over his countenance. His lips occasionally moved, as if in the utterance of prayer. When Mr F—— had closed the book, the first words uttered by E—— were, " Oh ! the infinite goodness of God ! "

" Do you feel that your ' anchor is within the veil ? ' " enquired F——.

" Oh !—yes—yes !—My vessel is steadily moored—the tide of life goes fast away—I am forgetting that I ever sailed on its sea ! " replied E——, closing his eyes.

" The star of faith shines clearest in the night of expiring nature ! " exclaimed F——.

" The Sun—the SUN of faith, say rather," replied E——, in a tone of fervent exultation ; " it turns my night into day—it warms my soul—it rekindles my

energies!—Sun—Sun of Righteousness!” he exclaimed, faintly. Miss E—— kissed him repeatedly with deep emotion. “Emma, my love!” he whispered, “hope thou in God! See how he will support thee in death!”—She burst into tears.—“Will you promise me, love, to read the little Bible I gave you, when I am gone—especially the *New Testament*?—Do—do, love.”

“I will—I”——, replied Miss E——, almost choked with her emotions. She could say no more.

“Dr ——,” he addressed me, “I feel more towards you than I can express; your services—services”—— he grew very pale and faint. I rose and poured out a glass of wine, and put it to his lips. He drank a few teaspoonfuls, and it revived him.

“Well!” he exclaimed, in a stronger voice than I had before heard him speak; “I thank God I leave the world in perfect peace with all mankind! There is but one thing that grieves me, in these my last thoughts on life—the general neglect of religion among men of science.” Dr D—— said it must afford him great consolation to reflect on the steadfast regard for religion which *he* himself had always evidenced. “No, no—I have gone nearly as far astray as any of them: but God’s rod has brought me back again. I thank God devoutly, that He ever afflicted me as I have been afflicted through life—He knows I do!” * * * Some one mentioned the prevalence of Materialism. He lamented it bitterly; but assured us that several of the most eminent men of the age—naming them—believed firmly in the immateriality and immortality of the human soul.

“Do *you* feel firmly convinced of it—on natural and philosophical grounds?” enquired Dr D——.

“ I do ; and have, ever since I instituted an enquiry on the subject. *I* think the *difficulty* is to believe the reverse—when it is owned, on all hands, that nothing in Nature’s changes suggests the idea of annihilation. I own that doubts have very often crossed my mind on the subject—but could never see the reason of them.”

“ But *your* confidence does not rest on the barren grounds of reason,” said I ; “ you believe Him who brought ‘ life and immortality ’ into the world.”

“ Yes—‘ Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ ! ’ ”

“ Do you *never* feel a pang of regret at leaving life ? ” I enquired.

“ No, no, no ! ” he replied with emphasis ! “ Life and I are grown unfit for each other ! My sympathies, my hopes, my joys, are too large for it ! Why should I, just got into the haven, think of risking shipwreck again ? ”

* * * * *

He lay still for nearly twenty minutes without speaking. His breathing was evidently accomplished with great difficulty ; and when his eyes occasionally fixed on any of us, we perceived that their expression was altered. He did not seem to see what he looked at. I noticed his fingers, also, slowly twitching or scratching the bed-clothes. Still the expression of his features was calm and tranquil as ever. He was murmuring something in Miss E——’s ear ; and she whispered to us that he said, “ Don’t go—*I shall want you at six.* ” Within about a quarter of six o’clock, he enquired where Emma was, and Dr D——, and Mr F——, and myself. We severally answered, that we sat around him.

“ I have not *seen* you for the last twenty minutes. Shake hands with me !” We did. “ Emma, my sweet love ! put your arm round my neck—I am cold, very cold.” Her tears fell fast on his face. “ Don’t cry, love, don’t—I am quite happy ! God—God bless you, love !”

His lower jaw began to droop a little.

Mr F——, moved almost to tears, rose from his chair, and noiselessly kneeled down beside him.

“ Have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ !” he exclaimed, looking steadfastly into his face.

“ I do !” he answered distinctly, while a faint smile stole over his drooping features.

“ Let us pray !” whispered Mr F—— ; and we all knelt down in silence. I was never so overpowered in my life. I thought I should have been choked with suppressing my emotions. “ O Lord, our heavenly Father !” commenced Mr F——, in a low tone, “ receive Thou the spirit of this our dying brother”——. E—— slowly elevated his left hand, and kept it pointing upwards for a few moments, when it suddenly dropped, and a long, deep respiration announced that this great and good man had breathed his last !

No one in the room spoke or stirred for several minutes ; and I almost thought I could hear the beatings of our hearts. He died within a few moments of six o’clock. Yes—there lay the sad effigy of our deceased “ guide, philosopher, and friend,”—and yet, why call it sad ? I could detect no trace of sadness in his features. He had left the world in peace and joy ; he had lived well, and died as he had lived. I can now appreciate

the force of that prayer of one of old—"Let ME die the death of the righteous, and let MY last end be like his!"

There was some talk among his friends of erecting a tablet to his memory in Westminster Abbey ; but it has been dropped. We soon lose the recollection of departed excellence, if it require any thing like active exertion.

CHAPTER III.

THE STATESMAN.

AMBITION!—Its sweets and bitters—its splendid miseries—its wrinkling cares—its wasting agonies—its triumphs and downfalls—who has not, in some degree, known and felt them? Moralists, historians, and novelists, have filled libraries in picturing their dreary yet dazzling details; nevertheless, Ambition's votaries, or rather victims, are as numerous, as enthusiastic, as ever!

Such is the mounting quality existing in almost every one's breast, that no "Pelion upon Ossa" heapings, and accumulations of facts and lessons, can keep it down. Fully as I feel the truth of this remark, vain and futile though the attempt may prove, I cannot resist the inclination to contribute my mite towards the vast memorials of Ambition's martyrs!

My specific purpose in first making the notes from which the ensuing narrative is taken, and in now presenting it to the public—in thus pointing to the spectacle of a sun suddenly and disastrously eclipsed while blazing at its zenith—is this: To show the steps by which a really great mind—an eager and impetuous spirit

—was voluntarily sacrificed at the shrine of political ambition : foregoing, nay, despising the substantial joys and comforts of elegant privacy, and persisting, even to destruction, in its frantic efforts to bear up against, and grapple with cares too mighty for the mind of man. It is a solemn lesson, imprinted on my memory in great and glaring characters ; and if I do but succeed in bringing a few of them before the reader, they may serve at least to check extravagant expectations, by disclosing the misery which often lies cankering behind the most splendid popularity. If, by the way, I should be found inaccurate in my use of political technicalities and allusions, the reader will be pleased to overlook it, on the score of my profession.

I recollect, when at Cambridge, overhearing some men of my college talk about the “splendid talents of young Stafford,”* who had lately become a member of — Hall ; and they said so much about the “great *hit*” he had made in his recent debut at one of the debating societies—which then flourished in considerable numbers—that I resolved to take the earliest opportunity of going to hear and judge for myself. That was soon afforded me. Though not a member of this society, I gained admission through a friend. The room was crammed to the very door ; and I was not long in discovering the “star of the evening” in the person of a young fellow-commoner, of careless and even slovenly appearance. The first glimpse of his features disposed me to believe all I had heard in his favour. There was no sitting for *effect* ; nothing artificial about his demeanour

* It can hardly be necessary, I presume, to reiterate, that whatever names individuals are indicated by in these papers, are fictitious.

—no careful carelessness of attitude—no knitting of the brows, or painful straining of the eyes, to look brilliant or acute! The mere absence of all these little conceits and fooleries, so often disfiguring “talented young speakers,” went, in my estimation, to the account of his superiority. His face was “sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought,” and its lineaments were very deeply and strongly marked. There was a wondrous power and fire in the eyes, which gleamed with restless energy whichever way he looked. They were neither large nor prominent—but all soul—all expression. It was startling to find their glance suddenly settled on one. His forehead, as much as I saw of it, was knotted and expansive. There was a prevailing air of anxiety about his worn features, young as he was—being then only twenty-one—as if his mind were every instant hard at work—which an inaccurate observer might have set down to the score of ill-nature, especially when coupled with the matter-of-fact unsmiling nods of recognition, with which he returned the polite inclinations of those who passed him. To me, sitting watching him, it seemed as though his mind were of too intense and energetic a character to have any sympathies with the small matters transpiring around him. I knew his demeanour was simple, unaffected, genuine, and it was refreshing to see it. It predisposed me to like him, if only for being free from the ridiculous airs assumed by some with whom I associated. He allowed five or six speakers to address the society, without making notes, or joining in the noisy exclamations and interruptions of those around him. At length he rose amid perfect silence—the silence of expectant criticism whetted by rivalry. He

seemed at first a little flustered, and, for about five minutes, spoke hesitatingly and somewhat unconnectedly—with the air of a man who does not know exactly how to *get at* his subject, which he is yet conscious of having thoroughly mastered. At length, however, the current ran smooth, and gradually widened and swelled into such a stream—a torrent of real eloquence—as I never before or since heard poured from the lips of a young speaker—or, possibly, any speaker whatsoever, except himself in after life. He seemed long disinclined to enhance the effect of what he was uttering by oratorical gesture. His hands both grasped his cap, which, ere long, was compressed, twisted, and crushed out of all shape; but, as he warmed, he laid it down, and used his arms, the levers of eloquence, with the grace and energy of a natural orator. The effect he produced was prodigious. We were all carried away with him, as if by whirlwind force. As for myself, I felt, for the first time, convinced that oratory such as that could persuade me to any thing. As might have been expected, his speech was fraught with the faults incident to youth and inexperience, and was pervaded with a glaring hue of extravagance and exaggeration. Some of his “facts” were preposterously incorrect, and his inferences false; but there was such a prodigious power of language—such a blaze of fancy—such a stretch and grasp of thought—and such casuistical dexterity evinced throughout, as indicated the presence of first-rate capabilities. He concluded amid a storm of applause; and before his enthusiastic auditors, whispering together their surprise and admiration, could observe his motions, he had slipped away and left the room.

The excitement into which this young man's "*first appearance*" had thrown me, kept me awake the greater part of the night ; and I well recollect feeling a transient fit of disinclination for the dull and sombre profession of medicine, for which I was destined. That evening's display warranted my indulging high expectations of the future eminence of young Stafford ; but I hardly went so far as to think of once seeing him Secretary of State, and leader of the British House of Commons. Accident soon afterwards introduced me to him, at the supper-table of a mutual friend. I found him distinguished as well by that simplicity and frankness ever attending the consciousness of real greatness, as by the recklessness, irritability, and impetuosity, of one aware that he is far superior to those around him, and in possession of that species of talent which is appreciable by all—of those rare powers which ensure a man the command over his fellows—keen and bitter sarcasm, and extraordinary readiness of repartee. Then, again, all his predilections were political. He utterly disregarded the popular pursuits at college. Whatever he said, read, or thought, had reference to his "ruling passion"—and that not by fits and starts, under the arbitrary impulses of rivalry or enthusiasm, but steadily and systematically. I knew from himself, that, before his twenty-third year, he had read over and made notes of the whole of the Parliamentary debates, and have seen a table which he constructed for reference, on a most admirable and useful plan. The minute accuracy of his acquaintance with the whole course of political affairs, obtained by such laborious methods as this, may be easily conceived. His powers of memory were remarkable—as well for their

capacity as tenacity; and the presence of mind and judgment with which he availed himself of his acquisitions, convinced his opponent that he had undertaken an arduous, if not hopeless task, in rising to reply to him. It was impossible not to see, even in a few minutes' interview with him, that AMBITION had "marked him for her own." Alas! what a stormy career is before this young man! I have often thought, while listening to his fervid harangues and conversations, and witnessing the twin fires of intellect and passion flashing from his eyes. One large ingredient in his composition was a most morbid sensibility; and then he devoted himself to every pursuit with a headlong, undistinguishing enthusiasm and energy, which inspired me with lively apprehensions, lest he should wear himself out and fall by the way, before he could actually enter on the great arena of public life. His forehead was already furrowed with premature wrinkles!

His application was incessant. He rose every morning at five, and retired pretty regularly by eleven.

Our acquaintance gradually ripened into friendship; and we visited each other with mutual frequency and cordiality. When he left college, he entreated me to accompany him to the Continent; but financial difficulties, on my part, forbade it. He was possessed of a tolerably ample fortune; and, at the time of quitting England, was actually in treaty with Sir —— for a borough. I left Cambridge a few months after Mr Stafford; and as we were mutually engaged with the arduous and absorbing duties of our respective professions, we saw and heard little or nothing of one another for several years. In the very depth of my distress—

during the first four years of my establishment in London—I recollect once calling at the hotel which he generally made his town quarters, for the purpose of soliciting his assistance in the way of introductions; when, to my anguish and mortification, I heard, that on that very morning he had quitted the hotel for Calais, on his return to the Continent.

At length Mr Stafford, who had long stood contemplating on the brink, dashed into the tempestuous waters of public life, and emerged—a member of Parliament for the borough of ——. I happened to see the gazette which announced the event, about two years after the occurrence of the accident which elevated me into fortune. I did not then require any one's interference on my behalf, being content with the independent exercise of my profession; and even if I had been unfortunate, too long an interval had elapsed, I thought, to warrant my renewing a mere college acquaintance with such a man as Mr Stafford. I was content, therefore, to keep barely within the extreme rays of this rising sun in the political hemisphere. I shall not easily forget the feelings of intense interest with which I saw, in one of the morning papers, the name of my *quondam* college friend, “MR STAFFORD,” standing at the head of a speech of two columns' length—or the delight with which I paused over the frequent interruptions of “*Hear, hear!*”—“*Hear, hear, hear!*”—“*Cheers*”—“*Loud Cheers*”—which marked the speaker's progress in the favour of the House. “We regret,” said the reporter, in a note at the end, “that the noise in the gallery prevented our giving at greater length the eloquent and effective maiden speech of Mr Stafford, which was cheered perpetually

throughout, and excited a strong sensation in the House." In my enthusiasm, I did not fail to purchase a copy of that newspaper, and have it now in my possession. It needed not the enquiries which every where met me, "Have you read Mr Stafford's maiden speech?" to assure me of his splendid prospects, the reward of his early and honourable toils. His "maiden speech" formed the sole engrossing topic of conversation to my wife and me as we sat at supper that evening; and she was asking me some such question as is generally uppermost in ladies' minds on the mention of a popular character, "What sort of *looking* man he was when I knew him at Cambridge?"—when a forcible appeal to the knocker and bell, followed by the servant's announcing, that "a gentleman wished to speak to me directly," brought me into my patients' room. The candles, which were only just lit, did not enable me to see the person of my visiter very distinctly; but the instant he spoke to me, removing a handkerchief which he held to his mouth, I recognised—could it be possible?—the very Mr Stafford we had been speaking of! I shook him affectionately by the hand, and should have proceeded to compliment him warmly on his last evening's success in the House, but that his dreadful paleness of features, and discomposure of manner, disconcerted me.

"My dear Mr Stafford, what is the matter? Are you ill? Has any thing happened?" I enquired anxiously.

"Yes, Doctor—perhaps fatally ill," he replied, with great agitation. "I thought I would call on you on my way from the House, which I have but just left. It is not my fault that we have not maintained our college acquaintance; but of that more hereafter. I wish your

advice—your honest opinion on my case. For God's sake, don't deceive me ! Last evening I spoke, for the first time, in the House, at some length, and with all the energy I could command. You may guess the consequent exhaustion I have suffered during the whole of this day; and this evening, though much indisposed with fever and a cough, I imprudently went down to the House, when Sir —— so shamefully misrepresented certain portions of the speech I had delivered the preceding night, that I felt bound to rise and vindicate myself. I was betrayed into greater length and vehemence than I had anticipated; and, on sitting down, was seized with such an irrepressible fit of coughing, as at last forced me to leave the House. Hoping it would abate, I walked for some time about the lobby—and, at length, thought it better to return home than re-enter the House. While hunting after my carriage, the violence of the cough subsided into a small, hacking, irritating one, accompanied with spitting. After driving about as far as Whitehall, the vivid glare of one of the street-lamps happened to fall suddenly on my white pocket-handkerchief, and, O God !" continued Mr Stafford, almost gasping for breath, "this horrid sight met my eye !" He spread out a pocket-handkerchief, all spotted and dabbled with blood ! It was with the utmost difficulty that he communicated to me what is gone before. "Oh ! it's all over with me—the chapter's ended, I'm afraid !" he murmured almost inarticulately; and, while I was feeling his pulse, he fainted. I placed him instantly in a recumbent position—loosened his neckerchief and shirt-collar—dashed some cold water in his face—and he presently recovered. He shook his head, in silence, very mourn-

fully—his features expressing utter hopelessness. I sat down close beside him, and, grasping his hand in mine, endeavoured to re-assure him. The answers he returned to the few questions I asked him, convinced me that the spitting of blood was unattended with danger, provided he could be kept quiet in body and mind. There was not the slightest symptom of radical mischief in the lungs. A glance at his stout build of body, especially at his ample sonorous chest, forbade the supposition. I explained to him, with even professional minuteness of detail, the true nature of the accident, its effects, and method of cure. He listened to me with deep attention, and, at last, seemed convinced. He clasped his hands, exclaiming, “Thank God! thank God!” and entreated me to do on the spot, what I had directed to be done by the apothecary—to bleed him. I complied, and, from a large orifice, took a considerable quantity of blood. I then accompanied him home—saw him consigned to bed—prescribed the usual lowering remedies—absolutely forbade him to open his lips, except in the slightest whisper possible; and left him calm, and restored to a tolerable measure of self-possession.

One of the most exquisite sources of gratification, arising from the discharge of our professional duties, is the disabusing our patients of their harrowing and groundless apprehensions of danger. One such instance as is related above, is to me an ample recompense for months of miscellaneous, and often thankless toil, in the exercise of my profession. Is it not, in a manner, plucking a patient from the very brink of the grave, to which he had despairingly consigned himself, and placing him once more in the busy throng of life—the very heart of

society? I have seen men of the strongest intellect and nerve—whom the detection of a novel and startling symptom has terrified into giving themselves up for lost—in an instant dispossessed of their apprehensions, by explaining to them the real nature of what has alarmed them.* The alarm, however, occasioned by the rupture of a bloodvessel in or near the lungs, is seldom unwarranted, although it may be excessive: and though we can soon determine whether or not the accident is in the nature of a primary disease, or symptomatic of some incurable pulmonary affection, and dissipate or corroborate our patient's apprehensions accordingly, it is no more than prudent to warn one who has once experienced this injury, against any exertions or excesses which have a tendency to interfere with the action of the lungs, by keeping in sight the *possibility* of a fatal relapse. To return, however, to Mr Stafford.

His recovery was tardier than I could have expected. His extraordinary excitability completely neutralized the

* One instance presses so strongly on my recollection, that I cannot help adverting to it:—I was one day summoned in haste to an eminent merchant in the city, who thought he had grounds for apprehending occasion for one of the most appalling operations known in surgery. When I arrived, on finding the case not exactly within my province, I was going to leave him in the hands of a surgeon; but seeing that his alarm had positively half maddened him, I resolved to give him what assistance I could. I soon found that his fears were chimerical; but he would not believe me. When, however, I succeeded in convincing him, that “all was yet right with him,” by referring the sensations which had alarmed him to an unperceived derangement of his *dress*, tongue cannot utter, nor I ever forget, the ecstasy with which he at last “gave to the winds his fears.” He insisted on my accepting one of the largest fees that had ever been tendered me.

effect of my lowering and calming system of treatment. I could not persuade him *to give his mind rest* ; and the mere glimpse of a newspaper occasioned such a flutter and agitation of spirits, that I forbade them altogether for a fortnight. I was in the habit of writing my prescriptions in his presence, and pausing long over them for the purpose of unsuspectingly observing him ; and though he would tell me that his “ mind was still as a stagnant pool,” his intense air, his corrugated brows and fixed eyes, evinced the most active exercise of thought. When in a sort of half-dozing state, he would often mutter about the subjects nearest his heart. “ Ah ! *must go out*—the —— Bill, their touchstone—ay—though —— and his Belial-tongue.”

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“ 'Tis cruel—'tis tantalizing, Doctor,” he said, one morning, “ to find one's self held by the foot in this way, like a chained eagle ! The world forgets every one that slips for a moment from public view. Alas ! alas ! my plans—my projects—are all unravelling ! ” — “ Thy sun, young man, may go down at noon ! ” I often thought, when reflecting on his restless and ardent spirit. He wanted case-hardening—long *physical* training—to fit him for the harassing and exhausting campaign on which he had entered. Truly, truly, your politician should have a frame of adamant, and a mind “ thereto conforming strictly.” He should be utterly inaccessible to emotion—and especially to the finer feelings of our nature, since there is no room for their exercise. He should forget his heart, his family, his friends—every thing except his own interest and ambition. It should be with him as with a consummate intriguer of old—

No rest, no breathing time had he, or lack'd—
Lest from the slippery steep he suddenly
Might fall. Of every joy forgetful quite,
Life's softness had no charm for him——

His object sole
To cheat the silly world of her applause—his eye
Fix'd with stern steadfastness upon the Star
That shed but madness on him.

I found Mr Stafford one day in high chafe about a sarcastic allusion in the debate to a sentiment which he had expressed in Parliament—"Oh! one might wither that fellow with a word or two, the stilted noodle!" said he, pointing to the passage, while his eye glanced like lightning.

"You'll more likely wither your own prospects of ever making the trial, if you don't moderate your exertions," I replied. He smiled incredulously, and made me no answer, but continued twisting about his pencil-case with a rapidity and energy which showed the high excitement under which he was labouring. His hard, jerking, irregular pulse, beating on the average a hundred a-minute, excited my lively apprehensions, lest the increased action of the heart should bring on a second fit of blood-spitting. I saw clearly that it would be in vain for him to court the repose essential to his convalescence, so long as he continued in town; and, with infinite difficulty, prevailed on him to betake himself to the country. We wrung a promise from him that he would set about "unbending"—"unharnessing," as he called it—that he would "give his constitution fair play." He acknowledged that, to gain the objects he had proposed to himself, it was necessary for him "to husband his

resources ;” and briskly echoed my quotation—“ *neque semper arcum tendit Apollo.*” In short, we dismissed him in the confident expectation of seeing him return, after a requisite interval, with recruited energies of body and mind. He had scarcely, however, been gone a fortnight, before a paragraph ran the round of the daily papers, announcing, as nearly ready for publication, a political pamphlet, “ by Charles Stafford, Esq., M.P. ;”—and in less than three weeks—sure enough—a packet was forwarded to my residence, from the publisher, containing my rebellious patient’s pamphlet, accompanied with the following hasty note :—“ Ασχληπιε—Even with you !—you did not, you will recollect, interdict *writing* ; and I have contrived to *amuse* myself with the accompanying trifle.—Please look at page ——, and see the kind things I have said of poor Lord ——, the worthy who attacked me the other evening in the House, behind my back.” This “ trifle ” was in the form of a pamphlet of sixty-four pages, full of masterly argumentation, and impetuous eloquence ; but, unfortunately, owing to the publisher’s dilatoriness, it came “ a day behind the fair,” and attracted but little attention.

His temporary rustication, however, was attended with at least two beneficial results—recruited health, and the heart of Lady Emma ——, the beautiful daughter of a nobleman remotely connected with Mr Stafford’s family. This attachment proved powerful enough to alienate him for a while from the turmoils of political life ; for not only did the beauty, wealth, and accomplishments of Lady Emma —— render her a noble prize, worthy of great effort to obtain, but a powerful military rival had taken the field before Mr Stafford made his appearance, and

seemed disposed to move heaven and earth to carry her off. It is needless to say, how such a consideration was calculated to rouse and absorb all the energies of the young senator, and keep him incessantly on the *qui vive*. It is said that the lady wavered for some time, uncertain to which of her brilliant suitors she should give the nod of preference. Chance decided the matter. It came to pass that a contested election arose in the county; and Mr Stafford made a very animated and successful speech from the hustings (not far from which, at a window, was standing Lady Emma) in favour of her ladyship's brother, one of the candidates. *Io triumphe!* That happy evening the enemy "surrendered at discretion;" and, ere long, it was known far and wide, that—in newspaper slang—"an affair was on the *tapis*," between Mr Stafford and the "beautiful and accomplished Lady Emma ——," &c. &c.

It is my firm persuasion, that the diversion in his pursuits effected by this "affair," by withdrawing Mr Stafford for a considerable interval from cares and anxieties which he was physically unable to cope with, lengthened his life for many years; giving England a splendid statesman, and this, my Diary, the sad records which are now to be laid before the reader.

One characteristic of our profession, standing, as it were, in such sad and high relief, as to scare many a sensitive mind from entering into its service, is, that it is concerned, almost exclusively, with the dark side of humanity. As carnage and carrion guide the gloomy flight of the vulture, so MISERY is the signal for a medical

man's presence. *We* have to do daily with broken hearts, blighted hopes, pain, sorrow, death! And though the satisfaction arising from the due discharge of our duties be that of a good Samaritan—a rich return,—we cannot help counting the heavy cost—aching hearts, weary limbs, privations, ingratitude. Dark array! It may be considered placing the matter in a whimsical point of view; yet I have often thought that the two great professions of Law and Medicine are but foul carrion birds—the one preying on the moral, as the other on the physical, rottenness of mankind.

“Those who are well need not a physician,” say the Scriptures; and on this ground, it is easy to explain the melancholy hue pervading these papers. They are mirrors reflecting the dark colours exposed to them. It is true, that some remote relations, arising out of the particular combinations of circumstances, first requiring our professional interference, may afford, as it were, a passing gleam of distant sunshine, in the developement of some trait of beautiful character, some wondrous “good, from seeming ill educed;” but these are incidental only, and evanescent—enhancing, not relieving the gloom and sorrow amid which we move. A glimpse of Heaven would but aggravate the horrors of Hell!—These chilling reflections force themselves on my mind, when surveying the very many entries in my Diary, concerning the eminent individual whose case I am now narrating—concerning one who seemed born to bask in the brightness of life—to reap the full harvest of its joys and comforts, and yet “walked in darkness!” Why should it have been so? Answer—*Ambition!*

The reader must hurry on with me through the next ten years of Mr Stafford's life, during which period he rose with almost unprecedented rapidity. He had hardly time, as it were, to get warm in his nest, before he was called to lodge in the one above him, and then the one above that; and so on, upwards, till people began to view his progress with their hands shading their dazzled eyes, while they exclaimed, "*fast for the top of the tree!*" He was formed for political popularity. He had a most winning, captivating, commanding style of delivery, which was always employed in the steady consistent advocacy of one line of principles. The splendour of his talents—his tact and skill in debate—the immense extent and accuracy of his political information—early attracted the notice of Ministers, and he was not suffered to wait long before they secured his services, by giving him a popular and influential office. During all this time, he maintained a very friendly intimacy with me, and often put into requisition my professional services. About eight o'clock one Saturday evening, I received the following note from Mr Stafford :—

"Dear —, excuse excessive haste. Let me entreat you (I will hereafter account for the suddenness of this application) to make instant arrangements for spending with me the *whole* of to-morrow (Sunday), at —, and to set off from town in time for breakfasting with Lady Emma and myself. Your presence is required by most urgent and *special* business; but allow me to beg you will appear at breakfast with an unconcerned air—as a chance visiter.—Yours always faithfully,

"C. STAFFORD."

The words "*whole*" and "*special*" were thrice under-scored ; and this, added to the very unusual illegibility of the writing, betrayed an urgency, and even agitation, which a little disconcerted me. The abruptness of the application occasioned me some trouble in making the requisite arrangements. As, however, it was not a busy time with me, I contrived to find a substitute for the morrow in my friend Dr D——.

It was on a lovely Sabbath morning, in July 18—, that, in obedience to the above hurried summons, I set off on horseback from the murky metropolis ; and, after rather more than a two hours' ride, found myself entering the grounds of Mr Stafford, who had recently purchased a beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames. It was about nine o'clock, and Nature seemed but freshly awakened from the depth of her overnight's slumbers, her tresses all uncurled, as it were, and her perfumed robes glistening with the pearls of morning dew. A deep and rich repose brooded over the scene, subduing every feeling of my soul into sympathy. A groom took my horse ; and, finding that neither Mr Stafford nor Lady Emma were yet stirring, I resolved to walk about and enjoy the scenery. In front of the house, stretched a fine lawn, studded here and there with laurel bushes and other elegant shrubs, and sloping down to the river's edge ; and on each side of the villa, and behind, were trees disposed with the most beautiful and picturesque effect imaginable. Birds were caroling cheerfully and loudly on all sides of me, as though they were intoxicated with their own "woodland melody." I walked about as amid enchantment, breathing the balminess and fragrance of the atmosphere, as the wild horse snuffs the scent of the

desert. How keenly are Nature's beauties appreciable when but rarely seen by her unfortunate admirer, who is condemned to a town life !

I stood on the lawn by the river's edge, watching the ripple of the retiring tide, pondering within myself whether it was possible for such scenes as these to have lost all charm for their restless owner. Did he relish or tolerate them ? Could the pursuits of ambition have blunted, deadened his sensibilities to the beauty of Nature, the delights of home ? These thoughts were passing through my mind, when I was startled by the tapping of a loose glove over my shoulder ; and on turning round, beheld Mr Stafford, in his flowered morning-gown, and his face partially shaded from the glare of the morning sun, beneath a broad-rimmed straw hat. " Good morning, Doctor—good morning," said he ; " a thousand thanks for your attention to my note of last night ; but see ! yonder stands Lady Emma, waiting breakfast for us," pointing to her ladyship, who was standing at the window of the breakfast-room. Mr Stafford put his arm into mine, and we walked up to the house. " My dear sir, what can be the meaning of your "—— said I, with an anxious look.

" Not a word—not a breath—if you please, till we are alone after breakfast."

" Well—you are bent on tantalizing ! What *can* be the matter ? What is this mountain mystery ? "

" It may prove a molehill, perhaps," said he, carelessly ; " but we'll see after breakfast."

" What an enchanting spot you have of it ! " I exclaimed, pausing and looking around me.

" Oh, very paradisaical, I dare say," he replied, with an air of indifference that was quite laughable. " By

the way," he added, hurriedly, "did you hear any rumour about Lord ——'s resignation late last night?" "Yes." "And his successor — is *he* talked of?" he enquired eagerly. "Mr C——." "Mr C——! Is it possible? Ah, ha"——he muttered, raising his hand to his cheek, and looking thoughtfully downwards.

"Come, come, Mr Stafford, 'tis now my turn. Do drop these eternal politics for a few moments, I beg."—"Ay, ay, 'still harping on my daughter!' I'll *sink the shop*, however, for a while, as our town friends say. But I really beg pardon—'tis rude, very. But here we are. Lady Emma, Dr ——," said he, as we approached her ladyship through the opened stained-glass door-way. She sat before the breakfast urn, looking, to my eyes, as bloominglly beautiful as at the time of her marriage, though ten summers had waved their silken pinions over her head, but so softly as scarcely to flutter or fade a feature in passing. Yes, thus she sat in her native loveliness and dignity, the airiness of girlhood passed away into the mellowed maturity of womanhood! She looked the *beau-ideal* of simple elegance, in her long snowy morning dress, her clustering auburn hair surmounted with a slight gossamer network of blonde—not an ornament about her! I have her figure, even at this interval of time, most vividly before me, as she sat on that memorable morning, unconscious that the errand which made me her guest involved—but I will not anticipate. She adored, nay idolized her husband—little as she saw of him—and he was in turn as fondly attached to her as a man could be, whose whole soul was swallowed up in ambition. Yes, he was not the first to whom political pursuits have proved a very disease, shedding blight and mildew over the heart!

I thought I detected an appearance of restraint in the manner of each. Lady Emma often cast a furtive glance of anxiety at her husband—and with reason—for his features wore an air of repressed uneasiness. He was now and then absent, and, when addressed by either of us, would reply with a momentary sternness of manner—passing, however, instantly away—which showed that his mind was occupied with unpleasant or troubled thoughts. He seemed at last aware that his demeanour attracted our observation, and took to acting. All traces of anxiety or uneasiness disappeared, and gave place to his usual perfect urbanity and cheerfulness. Lady Emma's manner towards me, too, was cooler than usual, which I attributed to the fact of my presence not having been sufficiently accounted for. My embarrassment may be easily conceived.

“What a delicious morning!” exclaimed Lady Emma, looking through the window at the fresh blue sky and the cheery prospect beneath. We echoed her sentiments. “I think,” said I, “that, could I call such a little paradise as this *mine*, I would quit the smoke and uproar of London for ever!” “I wish all thought with you, Dr —,” replied her ladyship with a sigh, looking touchingly at her husband.

“What opportunities for tranquil thought!” I went on.

“Ay, and so forth!” said Mr Stafford, gaily. “Listen to another son of peace and solitude, my Lord Roscommon—

Hail, sacred Solitude! from this calm bay,
I view the world's tempestuous sea,
And with wise pride despise
All those senseless vanities :

With pity moved for others, cast away
 On rocks of hopes and fears, I see them toss'd,
 On rocks of folly and of vice, I see them lost :
 Some, the prevailing malice of the great,
 Unhappy men, or adverse fate,
 Sunk deep into the gulfs of an afflicted state :
 But more, far more, a numberless prodigious train,
 Whilst Virtue courts them, but, alas ! in vain,
 Fly from her kind embracing arms,
 Deaf to her fondest call, blind to her greatest charms,
 And, sunk in pleasures and in brutish ease,
 They, in their shipwreck'd state, themselves obdurate please.

* * * *

Here may I always on this downy grass,
 Unknown, unseen, my easy moments pass,
 Till, with a gentle force, victorious Death
 My solitude invade,
 And, stopping for a while my breath,
 With ease convey me to a *better shade*.*

“ *There’s* for you, my lady ! Well sung, my Lord Roscommon ! Beautiful as true ! ” exclaimed Mr Stafford, gaily, as soon as he had concluded repeating the above ode, in his own distinct and beautiful elocution, with real pathos of manner ; but his mouth and eye betrayed that his own mind sympathized not with the emotions of the poet, but rather despised the air of inglorious repose they breathed. The tears were in Lady Emma’s eyes, as she listened to him ! Presently one of his daughters, a fine little girl about six years of age, came sidling and simpering into the room, and made her way to her mother. She was a lively, rosy, arch-eyed little crea-

* The French Translator has been at the pains of translating the whole of the above poem of Lord Roscommon’s, *verbatim et literatim* !

ture, and her father looked fondly at her for a moment, exclaiming, "Well, Eleanor!" and his thoughts had evidently soon passed far away. The conversation turned on Mr Stafford's reckless, absorbing pursuit of politics, which Lady Emma and I deplored, and entreated him to give more of his time and affections to domestic concerns. * * "You talk to me as if I were dying," said he, rather petulantly; "why should I not pursue my profession—my legitimate profession?—As for your still waters—your pastoral simplicities—your Arcadian bliss—pray what inducements have I to run counter to my own inclinations to cruise what you are pleased to call the stormy sea of politics?" "What inducements?—Charles, Charles, can't you find them *here*?" said his lady, pointing to herself and her daughter. Mr Stafford's eyes filled with tears, even to overflowing, and he grasped her hand with affectionate energy, took his smiling unconscious daughter on his knee, and kissed her with passionate fervour. "*Semel insanivimus omnes*," he muttered to me, a few moments after, as if ashamed of the display he had recently made. For my own part, I saw that he occasionally lost the control over feelings which were, for some reason or other, disturbed and excited. What could possibly have occurred? Strange as it may seem, a thought of the real state of matters, as they will presently be disclosed, never for an instant crossed my mind. I longed—I almost sickened—for the promised opportunity of being alone with him. It was soon afforded me by the servants appearing at the door, and announcing the carriage.

"Oh dear, positively prayers will be over!" exclaimed Lady Emma, rising, and looking hurriedly at her watch,

"we've quite forgotten church-hours! Do you accompany us, Doctor?" said she, looking at me.

"No, Emma," replied Mr Stafford, quickly; "you and the family must go alone this morning—I shall stop and keep Dr —— company, and take a walk over the country for once." Lady Emma, with an unsatisfied glance at both of us, withdrew. Mr Stafford immediately proposed a walk; and we were soon on our way to a small Gothic alcove near the water-side.

"Now, Doctor, to the point," said he abruptly, as soon as we were seated. "Can I reckon on a *real* friend in you?" scrutinizing my features closely.

"Most certainly you may," I replied, with astonishment. "What can I do for you?—Something or other is wrong, I fear! Can *I* do any thing for you in any way?"

"Yes," said he deliberately, and looking fixedly at me, as if to mark the effect of his words; "I shall require a proof of your friendship soon; I must have your services this evening—at seven o'clock."

"Gracious Heaven, Mr Stafford!—why—why—is it possible that—do I guess aright?" I stammered, almost breathless, and rising from my seat.

"O Doctor—don't be foolish—excuse me—but don't—don't, I beg! Pray give me your answer! I'm sure you understand my question." Agitation deprived me for a while of utterance.

"I beg an answer, Dr ——," he resumed coldly, "as, if you refuse, I shall be very much inconvenienced. 'Tis but a little affair—a silly business, that circumstances have made inevitable—I'm sure you must have seen a hint at it in the last night's papers. Don't misunderstand

me," he proceeded, seeing me continue silent ; " I don't wish you to take an active part in the business—but to be on the spot—and, in the event of any thing unfortunate happening to me—to hurry home here, and prepare Lady Emma and the family—that is all. Mr G——" (naming a well-known army surgeon) " will attend professionally." I was so confounded with the suddenness of the application that I could do nothing more than mutter indistinctly my regret at what had happened.

" Well, Doctor ——," he continued, in a haughty tone, " I find that, after all, I have been mistaken in my man. I own I did not expect that this—the first favour I have ever asked at your hands, and, possibly, the last—would have been refused. But I must insist on an answer one way or another ; you must be aware I've no time to lose."

" Mr Stafford—pardon me—you mistake me ! Allôw me a word ; you cannot have committed yourself rashly in this affair ! Consider Lady Emma—your children"——

" I have—I have," he answered, grasping my hand, while his voice faltered, " and I need hardly inform you that it is that consideration only which occasions the little disturbance of manner you may have noticed. But you are a man of the world enough to be aware that I MUST go through with the business. I am not the challenger."

I asked him for the particulars of the affair. It originated in a biting sarcasm which he had uttered, with reference to a young nobleman, in the House of Commons, on Friday evening, which had been construed into a personal affront, and for which an apology had been demanded—mentioning the alternative, in terms almost approaching to insolence, evidently for the purpose of provoking him into a refusal to retract or apologize.

"It's my firm persuasion that there is a plot among a certain party to destroy me—to remove an obnoxious member from the House—and this is the scheme they have hit upon! I have succeeded, I find, in annoying the —— interest beyond measure; and so they must, at all events, get rid of me! Ay, this *cur* of a lordling it is," he continued, with fierce emphasis, "who is to make my sweet wife a widow, and my children orphans—for Lord ——* is notoriously one of the best shots in the country! Poor—poor Emma!" he exclaimed with a sigh, thrusting his hand into his bosom, and looking down dejectedly. We neither of us spoke for some time. "Would to Heaven we had never been married!" he resumed. "Poor Lady Emma leads a wretched life of it, I fear! But I honestly warned her that my life would be strewn with thorny cares even to the grave's brink!"

"So you have really pitched upon *this* evening—Sunday evening, for this dreadful business?" I enquired.

"Exactly. We must be on the spot by seven precisely. I say *we*, Doctor," he continued, laying his hand on mine. I consented to accompany him. "Come now, that's kind! I'll remember you for it. * * * It is now nearly half-past twelve," looking at his watch, "and by one, my Lord A——,"† mentioning a well-known nobleman, "is to be here; who is to stand by me on the occasion. I wish he were here; for I've added a codicil to my will, and want you both to witness my signature. * * * I look a little fagged—don't I?" he asked, with a smile. I told him he certainly looked rather sallow and worn. "How does our friend walk

* "Lord Porden!"—*French Translator.*

† "Lord Alcock!"—*Ditto.*

his paces?" he enquired, baring his wrist for me to feel his pulse. The circulation was little, if at all disturbed, and I told him so. "It would not have been very wonderful if it *had*, I think; for I've been up half the night—till nearly five this morning—correcting the two last proof-sheets of my speech on the —— Bill, which —— is publishing. I think it will read well; at least I hope it will, in common justice to myself, for it was most vilely curtailed and misrepresented by the reporters. By the way—would you believe it?—Sir ——'s* speech that night was nothing but a hundredth hash of mine, which I delivered in the House more than eight years ago!" said he, with an eager and contemptuous air. I made him no reply; for my thoughts were too sadly occupied with the dreadful communication he had recently made me. I abhorred, and do abhor and despise duelling, both in theory and practice; and now to have to be present at one, and one in which my friend—*such* a friend!—was to be a principal. This thought, and a glance at the possible, nay, probable, desolation and broken-heartedness which might follow, was almost too much for me. But I knew Mr Stafford's disposition too well to attempt expostulation—especially in the evidently morbid state of his feelings.

"Come, come, Doctor, let's walk a little. Your feelings flag. You might be going to receive *satisfaction* yourself," with a bitter sneer, "instead of seeing it given and taken by others. Come, cheer, cheer up." He put his arm in mine, and led me a few steps across the lawn, by the water-side. "Dear, dear me!" said he with

* "*Lord Williams*," says the French Translator, instead of Sir ——.

a chagrined air, pulling out his watch hastily, "I wish to Heaven my Lord A —— would make his appearance. I protest her ladyship will have returned from church before we have settled our few matters, unless, by the way, she drives round by Admiral ——'s, as she talked of last night. Oh, my God! think of my leaving her and the girls, with a gay air, as if we parted but for an hour, when it *may* be for ever! And yet what *can* one do?" While he was speaking, my eye caught sight of a servant making his way towards us rapidly through the shrubbery, bearing in his hands a letter, which he put into Mr Stafford's hands, saying, a courier had brought it that moment, and was waiting to take an answer back to town. "Ah—very good—let him wait till I come," said Mr Stafford. "Excuse me, Doctor ——," bursting open the envelope with a little trepidation, and putting it into my hands, while he read the enclosed note. The envelope bore in one corner the name of the premier, and, in the other, the words "private and confidential," and was sealed with the private crest and coronet of the Earl.

"Great God!—read it!" exclaimed Mr Stafford, thrusting the note before me, and elevating his eyes and hands despairingly. Much agitated myself, at witnessing the effect of the communication on my friend, I took it and read nearly as follows:—"My dear Stafford—I had late last night his Majesty's commands to offer to you the seals of the —— office, accompanied with the most gracious expressions of consideration for yourself personally, and his conviction that you will discharge the important duties henceforth devolving upon you, with honour to yourself, and advantage to his Majesty's councils. In all which, I need hardly assure you, I most

heartily concur. I beg to add, that I shall feel great pride and pleasure in having you for a colleague—and it has not been my fault that such was not the case earlier. May I entreat your answer by the bearer's return, as the state of public affairs will not admit of delay in filling up so important an office? I beg you will believe me, ever yours, most faithfully, ———.

“Whitehall, Sunday noon, 12 o'clock.”

After hurriedly reading the above, I continued holding the letter in my hands, speechlessly gazing at Mr Stafford. Well might such a bitter balk excite the tumultuous conflict of passions which the varying features of Mr Stafford—now flushed—now pale—too truly evidenced. This dazzling proffer made him only a few hours before his standing the fatal fire of an accomplished duellist! I watched him in silent agony. At length he clasped his hands with passionate energy, and exclaimed—“Oh! madness—madness—madness!—Just within reach of the prize I have run for all my life!” At that instant, a wherry, full of bedizened Londoners, passed close before us, on their way towards Richmond; and I saw by their whispers that they had recognized Mr Stafford. He also saw them, and exclaimed to me, in a tone I shall never forget, “Happy, happy fools!” and turned away towards the house. He removed his arm from mine, and stood pondering for a few moments with his eye fixed on the grass.

“Doctor, what's to be DONE?”—he almost shouted, turning suddenly to me, grasping my arm, and staring vacantly into my face. I began to fear lest he should totally lose the command of himself.

“For God's sake, Mr Stafford, be calm!—recollect

yourself!—or madness—ruin—I know not what—is before you !” I said, in an earnest imploring tone, seeing his eye still glaring fixedly upon me. At length he succeeded in overmastering his feelings. “ Oh!—folly, folly, this! Inevitable!—inevitable !” he exclaimed in a calmer tone. “ But the letter must be answered. What *can* I say, Doctor ?” putting his arm in mine, and walking up to the house rapidly. We made our way to the library, and Mr Stafford sat down before his desk. He opened his portefeuille slowly and thoughtfully. “ Of course—decline !” said he, with a profound sigh, turning to me with his pen in his hand.

“ No—assuredly, it would be precipitate. Wait for the issue of this sad business. YOU MAY escape.”—“ No—no—no ! My Lord —— is singularly prompt and decisive in all he does—especially in disposing of his places. I must—I must—ay”—beginning to write—“ I must respectfully decline—altogether. But on what grounds ? O God ! even should I escape to-day, I am ruined for ever in Parliament ! What will become of me ?” He laid down the pen, and moved his hand rapidly over his face.

“ Why—perhaps it would be better.—Tell his Lordship frankly how you are circumstanced.”

“ Tut !” he exclaimed, impetuously ; “ ask him for *peace-officers* ! a likely thing.” He pressed both his hands on his forehead, leaning on his elbows over the desk. A servant that moment appeared, and said—“ Please, sir, the man says he had orders not to wait more than five minutes ”——

“ Begone ! Let him wait, sir !” thundered Mr Stafford—and resumed his pen.

“Can’t you throw yourself on his Lordship’s personal good feeling towards you, and say that such an offer requires consideration—that it must interfere with, and derange, on the instant, many of your political engagements—and that your answer shall be at Whitehall by—say *nine* o’clock this evening? So you will gain time at least.”

“Good. ’Twill do—a fair plea for time; but I’m afraid!” said he mournfully; and taking his pen he wrote off an answer to that effect. He read it to me—folded it up—sealed it—directed it in his usual bold and flowing hand—I rang for the servant—and, in a few moments, we saw the courier galloping past the window.

“Now, Doctor, isn’t this enough to madden me? O God! it’s intolerable!” said he, rising and approaching me—“my glorious prospects to be darkened by this speck—this atom of puppyism—of worthlessness”—naming Lord——, his destined opponent. “Oh—if there were—if there *were*”——he resumed, speaking fiercely through his closed teeth, his eyes glaring downwards, and his hands clenched. He soon relaxed. “Well, well! it can’t be helped; ’tis inevitable—*πάντας πέφρωται ταῦτα κόρυς ἐκφενύεται*—I must say with Medea. Ah!—Lord A——at last,” he said, as a gentleman, followed by his groom, rode past the window. In a few moments he entered the library. His stature was lofty, his features commanding, and his bearing fraught with composure and military hauteur. “Ah, Stafford—good morning!” said he, approaching and shaking him warmly by the hand; “upon my soul, I’m sorry for the business I’m come about.”

“I can sympathize with you, I think,” replied Mr

Stafford, calmly. "My Lord, allow me—Dr ——." I bowed. "Fully in my confidence—an old friend," he whispered Lord A——, in consequence of his Lordship's inquisitive suspicious glance. * * "Well, you must teach the presumptuous puppy better manners this evening!" said his Lordship, adjusting his black stock with an indifferent air!

"Ay!—nothing like a LEADEN LESSON," replied Mr Stafford, with a cold smile.

——"For a leaden *head*, too, by ——!" rejoined his Lordship, quickly. "We shall run you pretty fair through, I think; for we have determined on putting you up at six paces."

"Six paces!—why we shall blow one another to ——!" echoed Mr Stafford, with consternation. "'*Twould* be rather hard to go there in such bad company I own. Six paces!" continued Mr Stafford; "how *could* you be so absurd!—It will be deliberate murder!"

"Poh, poh!—never a bit of it, my dear fellow—never a bit of it!—I've put many up at that distance—and, believe me, the chances are ten to two that both miss."

"Both miss at six paces?" enquired Mr Stafford, with an incredulous smile.

"Ay! both miss, I say; and no wonder either. Such contiguity!—Egad, 'twould make a *statue* nervous!"

"But, A——! have you *really* determined on putting us up at six paces?" again enquired Mr Stafford, earnestly.

"Most unquestionably," replied his Lordship, briskly; adding, rather coldly, "I flatter myself, Stafford, that

when a man's *honour* is at stake, six, or sixty paces, are matters equally indifferent."

"Ay, ay, A——, I dare say," replied Mr Stafford, with a melancholy air; "but 'tis hard to die by the hands of a puppy, and under such circumstances! Did you not meet a man on horseback?"

"Ay, ay," replied his Lordship, eagerly; "I did—a courier of my Lord ——'s, and thundering townward, at a prodigious rate. Any doings there between you and the premier?"

"Read!" said Mr Stafford, putting Lord ——'s letter into his hand. Before his Lordship had more than half read it, he let it fall on the table, exclaiming, "Good God! was there ever such an unfortunate thing in the world before!—Ha'n't it really driven you mad, Stafford?"

"No," he replied with a sigh; "the thing must be borne!" Lord A—— walked a few steps about the room, thoughtfully, with energetic gestures. "If—if I could but find a pretext—if I *could* but come across the puppy, in the interval—I'd give my life to have a shot preparatory with him!" he muttered. Mr Stafford smiled. "While I think of it," said he, opening his desk, "here's my will. I wish you and Dr —— to see me sign." We did—and affixed our names.

* * * * *

"By the way," said his Lordship, suddenly addressing Mr Stafford, who, with his chin resting on his hands, and his features wearing an air of intense thought, had been silent for some minutes; "how do you put off Lady Emma to-day? How do you account for your absence?"

"Why, I've told her we three were engaged to dinner at Sir ——'s," naming a neighbouring Baronet. "I'm

afraid it will kill Lady Emma if I fall," he faltered, while the tears rushed to his eyes. He stepped towards the decanters, which had, a little while before, been brought in by the servant; and, after asking us to do the same, poured out a glass, and drank it hastily—and another—and another.

"Well, this is one of the saddest affairs, altogether, that I ever knew!" exclaimed his Lordship. "Stafford, I feel for you from my heart's core—I do!" he continued, grasping him affectionately by the hand: "here's to your success to-night, and God's blessing to Lady Emma!" Mr Stafford started suddenly from him, and walked to the window, where he stood for a few minutes in silence. "Lady Emma is returning, I see," said he, approaching us. His features exhibited little or no traces of agitation. He poured out another glass of wine, and drank it off at a draught, and had hardly set down the glass, before the carriage-steps were heard letting down at the door. Mr Stafford turned to them with an eye of agony as his lady and one of her little girls descended.

"I think we'd perhaps better not join her Ladyship before our setting off," said Lord A——, looking anxiously at poor Stafford.

"Oh, but we *will*," said he, leading to the door. He had perfectly recovered his self-possession. I never knew a man that had such remarkable command of face and manner as Mr Stafford. I was amazed at the gay—almost *nonchalant*—air with which he walked up to Lady Emma—asked her about the sermon—whether she had called at Admiral ——'s—and several other such questions.

"Ah! and how is it with you, my little Hebe—eh?"

said he, taking the laughing girl into his arms, laughing, tickling and kissing her, with all a father's fondness. I saw his heart was swelling within him: and the touching sight brought, with powerful force, to my recollection a similar scene in the *Medea* of Euripides, where the mother is bewailing over the "last smile" of her children.* He succeeded in betraying no painful emotion in his lady's presence; and Lord A—— took good care to engage her in incessant conversation.

"What does your Ladyship say to a walk through the grounds?" said he, proffering his arm, which she accepted, and we all walked out together. The day was beautiful, but oppressively sultry, and we turned our steps towards the plantations. Mr Stafford and I walked together, and slipped a little behind for the purpose of conversation. "I shan't have much opportunity of speaking with you, Doctor," said he, "so I'll say what is uppermost now. Be sure, my dear Doctor, to hurry from the field—which is about four miles from my house—to Lady Emma, in the event of my being either killed or wounded, and do what you think best, to prepare my wife for the event. I cannot trust her to better, gentler hands than yours—my old, my tried friend!—— You

* I shall be pardoned, I am sure, by the classical reader, for reminding him of the exquisite language of the original:

Φεῦ! φεῦ!—τι προσδέξομαι μ' ὄμμασιν, τέκνα;
 —τί προσγελάετε τον πανυστατον γέλων;
 αἰ—αἰ!——καρδία λὰρ ὀίχεται
 —ὄμμα φαιδρὸν ὥς εἶδον τέκνων!
 οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην!

know where my will is—and I've given directions for my funeral."

"O dear, dear Stafford!" I interrupted him, moved almost to tears, "don't speak so hopelessly!"

"O Doctor—nonsense! there's no disguising matters from one's self. Is there a chance for me? No: I'm a murdered man; and can you doubt it? Lord —— can do only one thing well in the world, and that is, hit his man at any distance; and then *six paces* off each other! Lord A—— may say what he likes; but I call it murder. However, the absurd customs of society *must* be complied with!—I hope," he added, after a pause, "that when the nine days' wonder of the affair shall have passed off—if I fall—when the press shall cease its lying about it—that my friends will do justice to my memory. God knows, I *really* love my country, and would have served it: it was my ambition to do so; but it's useless talking now!—I am excessively vexed that this affair should have occurred before the —— question comes on, in preparation for which I have been toiling incessantly, night and day, for this month past. I know that great expectations"—— At that instant, Lord A—— and Lady Emma met us, and we had no farther opportunity of conversing. We returned to lunch after a few minutes' longer walk.

"God bless you, Emma!" said Mr Stafford, nodding; with an affectionate smile, as he took wine with his lady. He betrayed no emotion throughout the time we sat together, but conversed long—and often in a lively strain—on the popular topics of the day. He rang for his valet, and directed him to have his toilet ready, and to order the carriage for four o'clock. He then withdrew:

and, in about a quarter of an hour's time, returned, dressed in a blue surtout and white trowsers. He was a very handsome, well-made man, and seemed dressed with particular elegance, I thought.

"Upon my honour, Charles, you are in a pretty *dinner-trim*," said Lady Emma; "and *all* of you, I protest!" she continued, looking round with surprise at our walking dress. Mr Stafford told her, with a laugh, that we were going to meet none but bachelors.

"What!—why, where will the Miss ——s be?"

"Ordered out, my lady, for the day," replied Lord A——, with a smile, promptly, lest his friend should hesitate: "'tis to be the model of a divan, I understand!"

"Don't be late, love!" said Lady Emma to her husband, as he was drawing on his gloves; "you know I've little enough of you at all times—don't—don't be late!"

"No—no later than I can help, certainly!" said he, moving to the door.

"Say eleven—will you?—come, for *once*!"

"Well—yes. I WILL return by eleven," he replied, pointedly, and I detected a little tremulousness in his tone.

"Papa! papa!" exclaimed his little daughter, running across the hall, as her father was on the carriage steps; "Papa! papa! may I sit up to-night till you come home?" He made no reply, but beckoned us in, hurriedly—sat back in his seat—thundered, "Drive on, sir!"—and burst into tears.

"Oh, my dear fellow—Stafford—Stafford! This will never *do*. What will our friends on the ground say?" enquired Lord A——.

“What they like!” replied Mr Stafford, sternly, still in tears. He soon recovered himself.

* * After driving some time, “Now, let me give you a bit of advice,” said Lord A——, in an earnest tone: “we shall say only one word, by way of signal—‘Fire!’ and be sure to fire while you are in the act of raising your pistol.”

“Oh, yes—yes—yes—I understand”——

“Well, but be *sure*; don’t think of pointing first, and then firing—or, by ——, you’ll assuredly fire over his head, or fire far on one side. Only recollect to do as I say, and you will take him full in the ribs, or clip him in the neck, or at least wing him.”

“My dear fellow, do you take me for a *novice*? Do you forget my affair with ——?” enquired Mr Stafford, impatiently.

“I promised to meet G—— about here,” said Lord A——, putting his head out of the window. “Egad, if he is not punctual, I don’t know what we shall do, for he’s got my pistol-case. Where—where is he?” he continued, looking up the road. “There!” he exclaimed, catching sight of a horseman riding at a very slow pace. After we had overtaken him, and Lord A—— had taken the pistol-case into the carriage, and Mr Stafford had himself examined the pistols carefully, we rode side by side till we came near the scene of action. During that time, we spoke but little, and that little consisted of the most bitter and sarcastic expressions of Mr Stafford’s contempt for his opponent, and regret at the occurrence which had so tantalized him, alluding to Lord ——’s offer of the —— office. About ten minutes to seven, we alighted, and gave the coachman orders to remain

there till we returned. The evening was lovely—the glare of day “mellowed to that tender light” which characterises a summer evening in the country: As we walked across the fields towards the appointed spot, I felt sick and faint with irrepressible agitation, and Mr G——, the surgeon, with whom I walked, joked with me at my “squeamishness,” much in the style of tars with sea-sick passengers. “There’s nothing in it—nothing,” said he; “they’ll take care not to hurt one another. ’Tis a pity, too, that such a man as Mr Stafford should run the risk. What a noise it will make!” I let him talk on, for I could not answer, till we approached the fatal field, which we entered by a gap. Lord A—— got through first. “Punctual, however,” said he, looking round at Mr Stafford, who was following. “There they are—just getting over the stile. Inimitable coxcomb!”

“Ay, there they are, sure enough,” replied he, shading his eyes. “A——, for God’s sake, take care not to put me against the sunshine—it will dazzle”——

“Oh, never fear; it will go down before then; ’tis but just above the horizon now.” A touching image, I thought! It might be so with Mr Stafford—*his* sun “might go down—at noon!”

“Stop, my Lord,” said Mr Stafford, motioning Lord A—— back, and pressing his hand to his forehead. “A moment—allow me! Let me see—is there any thing I’ve forgot? Oh, I thought there was!” He hurriedly requested Lord A——, after the affair, in the event of its proving bloody, to call on the minister and explain it all. Lord A—— promised to do so. Ah—here, too,” unbuttoning his surtout, *this* must not be there, I suppose;” and he removed a small gold snuff-box from his

right to his left waistcoat pocket. "Let the blockhead have his full chance."

"Stuff, stuff, Stafford! That's Quixotic!" muttered Lord A——. He was much paler, and more thoughtful than I had seen him all along. All this occurred in much less time than I have taken to tell it. We all passed into the field; and, as we approached, saw Lord —— and his second, who were waiting our arrival. The appearance of the former was that of a handsome fashionable young man, with very light hair, and lightly dressed altogether; and he walked to and fro, switching about a little riding-cane. Mr Stafford released Lord A——, who joined the other second, and commenced the preliminary arrangements.

I never saw a greater contrast than there was between the demeanour of Mr Stafford and his opponent. There stood the former, his hat shading his eyes, his arms folded, eyeing the motions of his antagonist with a look of supreme—of utter contempt; for I saw his compressed and curled upper lip. Lord —— betrayed an anxiety—a visible effort to appear unconcerned. He "overdid it." He was evidently as uneasy, in the contiguity of Mr Stafford, as the rabbit shivering under the baleful glare of the rattlesnake's eye. One little circumstance was full of character at that agitating moment. Lord ——, anxious to manifest every appearance of coolness and indifference, seemed bent on demolishing a nettle, or some other prominent weed, and was making repeated strokes at it with the little whip he held. *This*, a few seconds before his life was to be jeopardied! Mr Stafford stood watching this puerile feat in the position I have formerly mentioned, and a withering smile stole over his features,

while he muttered—if I heard correctly—“ Poor boy ! poor boy ! ”

At length, the work of loading being completed, and the distance—six paces—duly stepped out, the duellists walked up to their respective stations. Their proximity was perfectly frightful. The pistols were then placed in their hands, and we stepped to a little distance from them.

“ Fire ! ” said Lord A—— ; and the word had hardly passed his lips, before Lord ——’s ball whizzed close past the ear of Mr Stafford. The latter, who had not even elevated his pistol at the word of command, after eyeing his antagonist for an instant with a scowl of contempt, fired in the air, and then jerked the pistol away towards Lord ——, with the distinctly audible words—“ Kennel, sir ! kennel ! ” He then walked towards the spot where Mr G—— and I were standing. Would to Heaven he had never uttered the words in question ! Lord —— had heard them, and followed him, furiously exclaiming, “ Do you call *this* satisfaction, sir ? ” and, through his second, insisted on a second interchange of shots. In vain did Lord A—— vehemently protest that it was contrary to all the laws of duelling, and that he would leave the ground—they were inflexible. Mr Stafford approached Lord A——, and whispered, “ For God’s sake, A——, don’t hesitate. Load—load again ! The fool WILL rush on his fate. Put us up again, and see if I fire a second time in the air ! ” His second slowly and reluctantly assented, and reloaded. Again the hostile couple stood at the same distance from each other, pale with fury ; and, at the word of command, both fired, and both fell. At one bound I sprung towards Mr Stafford,

almost blind with agitation. Lord A—— had him propped against his knee, and, with his white pocket-handkerchief, was endeavouring to staunch a wound in the right side. Mr Stafford's fire had done terrible execution, for his ball had completely shattered the lower jaw of his opponent, who was borne off the field instantly. Mr Stafford swooned, and was some minutes before he recovered, when he exclaimed feebly, "God forgive me, and be with my poor wife!" We attempted to move him, when he swooned a second time, and we were afraid it was all over with him. Again, however, he recovered; and, opening his eyes, he saw me with my fingers at his pulse. "Oh, Doctor, Doctor! what did you promise? Remember Lady Emm—" he could not get out the word. I waited till the surgeon had ascertained generally the nature of the wound, which he presently pronounced not fatal, and assisted in binding it up, and conveying him to the carriage. I then mounted Mr G——'s horse, and hurried on to communicate the dreadful intelligence to Lady Emma. I galloped every step of the way, and found, on my arrival, that her Ladyship had, but a few moments before, adjourned to the drawingroom, where she was sitting at coffee. Thither I followed the servant, who announced me. Lady Emma was sitting by the tea-table, and rose on hearing my name. When she saw my agitated manner, the colour suddenly faded from her cheeks. She elevated her arms, as if deprecating my intelligence; and, before I could reach her, had fallen fainting on the floor.

* * * * *

I cannot undertake to describe what took place on that dreadful night. All was confusion — agony — despair.

Mr Stafford was in a state of insensibility when he arrived at home, and was immediately carried up to bed. The surgeon succeeded in extracting the ball, which had seriously injured the fifth and sixth ribs, but had not penetrated to the lungs. Though the wound was serious, and would require careful and vigilant treatment, there was no ground for apprehending a mortal issue. As for Lord —, I may anticipate his fate. The wound he had received brought on a lock-jaw, of which he died in less than a week. And THIS is what is called SATISFACTION!

To return:—All my attention was devoted to poor Lady Emma. She did not even ask to see her husband, or move to leave the drawing-room, after recovering from her swoon. She listened, with apparent calmness, to my account of the transaction, which, the reader may imagine, was as mild and mitigated in its details as possible. As I went on, she became more and more thoughtful, and continued, with her eyes fixed on the floor, motionless and silent. In vain did I attempt to rouse her, by soothing—threats—surprise. She would gaze full at me, and relapse into her former abstracted mood. At length the drawing-room door was opened by some one—who proved to be Lord A——, come to take his leave. Lady Emma sprang from the sofa, burst from my grasp, uttered a long, loud, and frightful peal of laughter, and then came fit after fit of the strongest hysterics I ever saw. * * About midnight, Dr Baillie and Sir — arrived, and found their patients each insensible, and each in different apartments. Alas! alas! what a dreadful contrast between that hour and the hour of my arrival in

the morning ! O ambition ! O political happiness !—mockery !

Towards morning Lady Emma became calmer, and, under the influence of a pretty powerful dose of laudanum, fell into a sound sleep. I repaired to the bedside of Mr Stafford. He lay asleep, Mr G——, the surgeon, sitting on one side of the bed, and a nurse on the other. Yes, there lay the STATESMAN ! his noble features, though overspread with a pallid, a cadaverous hue, still bearing the ineffaceable impress of intellect. There was a loftiness about the ample expanded forehead, and a stern commanding expression about the partially knit eyebrows, and pallid compressed lips, which, even in the absence of the flashing eye, bespoke

—— the great soul,
Like an imprison'd eagle, pent within,
That fain would fly !

“ On what a slender thread hangs every thing in life ! ” thought I, as I stood silently at the foot of the bed, gazing on Mr Stafford. To think of a man like Stafford falling by the hand of an insignificant lad of a lordling—a titled bully ! Oh, shocking and execrable custom of duelling !—blot on the escutcheon of a civilized people !—which places greatness of every description at the mercy of the mean and worthless ; which lyingly pretends to assert a man's honour and atone for insult, by turning the tears of outraged feeling into blood !

About eight o'clock in the morning (Monday), I set off for town, leaving my friend in the skilful hands of Mr G——, and promising to return, if possible, in the evening. About noon, what was my astonishment to hear street-criers yelling every where a “ full, true, and

particular account of the bloody duel fought last night between Mr Stafford and Lord ——!" Curiosity prompted me to purchase the trash. I need hardly say that it was preposterous nonsense. The "duellists," it seemed, "fired *six* shots a-piece"—and what will the reader imagine were the "dying" words of Mr Stafford—according to these precious manufacturers of the marvellous?—"Mr Stafford then raised himself on his second's knee, and, with a loud and solemn voice, said, 'I leave my everlasting hatred to Lord ——, my duty to my king and country—my love to my family—and my precious soul to God!'"

The papers of the day, however, gave a tolerably accurate account of the affair, and unanimously stigmatized the "presumption" of Lord —— in calling out such a man as Mr Stafford—and on such frivolous grounds. My name was, most fortunately, not even alluded to. I was glancing through the columns of the evening ministerial paper, while the servant was saddling the horses for my return to the country, when my eye lit on the following paragraph:—"Latest News. Lord —— is appointed —— Secretary. We understand that Mr Stafford had the refusal of it." Poor Stafford! Lord A—— had called on the minister, late on Sunday evening, and acquainted him with the whole affair. "Sorry—very," said the premier. "Rising man that—but we could not wait. Lord —— is to be the man!"

I arrived at Mr Stafford's about nine o'clock, and made my way immediately to his bedroom. Lady Emma, pale and exhausted, sat by his bedside, her eyes swollen with weeping. At my request she presently withdrew, and I took her place at my patient's side. He was not sensible of my presence for some time, but lay with his

eyes half open, and in a state of low murmuring delirium. An unfortunate cough of mine, close to his ear, awoke him, and, after gazing steadily at me for nearly a minute, he recognised me and nodded. He seemed going to speak to me—but I laid my finger on my lips to warn him against the effort.

“One word—one only, Doctor,” he whispered hastily —“Who is the —— Secretary?” “Lord ——,” I replied. On hearing the name, he turned his head away from me with an air of intense chagrin, and lay silent for some time. He presently uttered something like the words—“too hot to hold him”—“unseat him”—and apparently fell asleep. I found, from the attendant, that all was going on well—and that Mr Stafford bade fair for a rapid recovery, if he would but keep his mind calm and easy. Fearful lest my presence, in the event of his waking again, might excite him into a talking mood, I slipped silently from the room and betook myself to Lady Emma, who sat awaiting me in her boudoir. I found her in a flood of tears. I did all in my power to soothe her, by reiterating my solemn assurances that Mr Stafford was beyond all danger, and wanted only quiet to recover rapidly.

“Oh, Doctor ——! how could you deceive me so yesterday? You knew all about it! How could you look at my little children, and”—— Sobs choked her utterance. “Well—I suppose you *could* not help it! I don’t blame you—but my heart is nearly broken about it! Oh, this *honour*—this *honour*! I always thought Mr Stafford above the foolery of such things!” She paused—I replied not—for I had not a word to say against what she uttered. I thought and felt *with* her.

“I would to Heaven that Mr Stafford would forsake

Parliament for ever ! These hateful politics ! He has no peace or rest by day or night !” continued Lady Emma, passionately. “ His nights are constantly turned into day—and his day is ever full of hurry and trouble ! Heaven knows I would consent to be banished from society—to work for my daily bread—I would submit to anything, if I could but prevail on Mr Stafford to return to the bosom of his family ! Doctor, my heart’s happiness is cankered and gone ! Mr Stafford does but *tolerate* me—his heart is not mine—it isn’t.” —. Again she burst into tears. “ What can your Ladyship mean ? ” I enquired with surprise.

“ What I say, Doctor,” she replied, sobbing. “ He is wedded to ambition ! ambition alone ! Oh ! I am often tempted to wish I had never seen or known him ! For the future, I shall live trembling from day to day, fearful of the recurrence of such frightful scenes as yesterday ! his reason will be failing him—his *reason* ! ” she repeated with a shudder, “ and *then* ! ” Her emotions once more deprived her of utterance. I felt for her from my very soul ! I was addressing some consolatory remark to her, when a gentle tapping was heard at the door. “ Come in,” said Lady Emma ; and Mr Stafford’s valet made his appearance, saying, with hurried gestures and grimaces—“ Ah, Docteur ! Mons. déraisonné—il est fou ! Il veut absolument voir Milord—— ! Je ne puis lui faire passer cette idée là ! ”

“ What *can* be the matter ! ” exclaimed Lady Emma, looking at me with alarm.

“ Oh, only some little wandering, I dare say ; but I’ll soon return and report progress ! ” said I, prevailing on her to wait my return, and hurrying to the sick chamber.

To my surprise and alarm, I found Mr Stafford sitting nearly bolt upright in bed, his eyes directed anxiously to the door.

"Dr ——," said he, as soon as I had taken my seat beside him, "I insist on seeing Lord ——," naming the prime minister; "I positively insist upon it! Let his Lordship be shown up instantly." I implored him to lie down, at the peril of his life, and be calm—but he insisted on seeing Lord ——. "He is gone, and left word that he would call at this time to morrow," said I, hoping to quiet him.

"Indeed? Good of him! What can he want? The office is disposed of. There! there! he has stepped back again! Show him up—show him up! What! insult the King's Prime Minister? Show him up, Louis," addressing his valet, adding drowsily, in a fainter tone, "and the members—the members—the—the—who paired off—who pair"—he sank gradually down on the pillow, the perspiration burst forth, and he fell asleep. Finding he slept on tranquilly and soundly, I once more left him, and having explained it to Lady Emma, bade her good evening, and returned to town. The surgeon who was in constant attendance on him, called at my house during the afternoon of the following day, and gave me so good an account of him, that I did not think it necessary to go down till the day after, as I had seriously broken in upon my own practice. When I next saw him he was mending rapidly. He even persuaded me into allowing him to have the daily papers read to him—a circumstance I much regretted after I left him, and suddenly recollected how often the public prints made allusions to him—some of them not very kindly or

complimentary. But there was no resisting his importunity. He had a wonderful wheedling way with him.

Two days after, he got me to consent to his receiving the visits of his political friends ; and really the renewal of his accustomed stimulus conduced materially to hasten his recovery.

Scarcely six weeks from the day of the duel, was this indefatigable and ardent spirit, Mr Stafford, on his legs in the House of Commons, electrifying it and the nation at large, by a speech of the most overwhelming power and splendour ! He flung his scorching sarcasms mercilessly at the astounded Opposition, especially at those who had contrived to render themselves in any way prominent in their opposition to his policy *during his absence* ! By an artful manœuvre of rhetoric—a skilful allusion to “recent unhappy circumstances”—he carried the House with him, from the very commencement, enthusiastically, to the end, and was at last obliged to pause almost every other minute, that the cheering might subside. The unfortunate nobleman who had stepped into the shoes which had been first placed at Mr Stafford’s feet—so to speak—came in for the cream of the whole ! A ridiculous figure he cut ! Jokes, sneers, lampoons, fell upon him like a shower of missiles on a man in the pillory. He was a fat man, and sat perspiring under it. The instant Mr Stafford sat down, this unlucky personage arose to reply. His odd and angry gesticulations, as he vainly attempted to make himself heard amidst incessant shouts of laughter, served to clinch the nail which had been fixed by Mr Stafford ; and the indignant senator presently left the House. Another—and another—and another of the singed ones, arose and “followed

on the same side ;” but to no purpose. It was in vain to buffet against the spring-tide of favour which had set in to Mr Stafford ! That night will not be forgotten by either his friends or foes. He gained his point !—within a fortnight he had ousted his rival, and was gazetted — Secretary ! The effort he made, however, on the occasion last alluded to, brought him again under my hands for several days. Indeed I never had such an intractable patient ! He could not be prevailed on to show any mercy to his constitution—he would not give nature fair play. Night and day — morning, noon, evening—spring, summer, autumn, winter—found him toiling on the tempestuous ocean of politics, his mind ever laden with the most harassing and exhausting cares. The eminent situation he filled, brought him, of course, an immense accession of cares and anxieties. He was virtually the leader of the House of Commons ; and, though his exquisite tact and talent secured to himself personally the applause and admiration of all parties, the government to which he belonged was beginning to disclose symptoms of disunion and disorganization, at a time when public affairs were becoming every hour more and more involved—our domestic and foreign policy perplexed—the latter almost inextricably—every day assuming a new and different aspect, through the operation of the great events incessantly transpiring on the Continent. The national confidence began rapidly to ebb away from the ministers, and symptoms of a most startling character appeared in different parts of the country. The House of Commons—the pulse of popular feeling—began to beat irregularly — now intermitting — now with feverish strength and rapidity — clearly indicat-

ing that the circulation was disordered. Nearly the whole of the newspapers turned against the ministry, and assailed them with the bitterest and foulest obloquy. Night after night, poor Mr Stafford talked himself hoarse, feeling that he was the acknowledged mouth-piece of the ministry; but in vain. Ministers were perpetually left in miserable minorities; they were beaten at every point. Their ranks presented the appearance of a straggling disbanded army; those of the Opposition hung together, like a shipwrecked crew clinging to the last fragments of their wreck. Can the consequences be wondered at?

At length came the Budget—word of awful omen to many a quaking ministry! In vain were the splendid powers of Mr Stafford put into requisition. In vain did his masterly mind fling light and order over his sombrous chaotic subject, and simplify and make clear to the whole country the, till then, dreary jargon and mysticism of financial technicalities. In vain, in vain did he display the sweetness of Cicero, the thunder of Demosthenes. The leader of the Opposition rose, and coolly turned all he had said into ridicule; one of his squad then started to his feet, and made out poor Mr Stafford to be a sort of ministerial swindler; and the rest cunningly gave the cue to the country, and raised up in every quarter clamorous dissatisfaction. Poor Stafford began to look haggard and wasted; and the papers said he stalked into the House, night after night, like a spectre. The hour of the ministry was come. They were beaten on the first item, in the committee of supply. Mr Stafford resigned, in disgust and indignation; and that broke up the government.

I saw him the morning after he had formally tendered

his resignation, and given up the papers, &c. of office. He was pitifully emaciated. The fire of his eye was quenched, his sonorous voice broken. I could scarcely repress a tear, as I gazed at his sallow, haggard features, and his languid limbs drawn together on his library sofa.

"Doctor—my friend! This frightful session has killed me, I'm afraid!" said he. "I feel equally wasted in body and mind. I loathe life—every thing!"

"I don't think you've been fairly dealt with! You've been crippled—shackled"——

"Yes—cursed—cursed—cursed in my colleagues," he interrupted me, with eager bitterness; "it is *their* execrable little-mindedness and bigotry that have concentrated on us the hatred of the nation. As for myself, I am sacrificed, and to no purpose. I feel I cannot long survive it; for I am withered, root and branch—withered!"

"Be persuaded, Mr Stafford," said I, gently, "to withdraw for a while, and recruit."

"Oh, ay, ay—any whither—any whither—as far off as possible from London—that's all. God pity the man that holds office in these times! The talents of half the angels in heaven wouldn't avail him! Doctor, I rave. Forgive me—I'm in a morbid, nay, almost rabid mood of mind. Foiled at every point—others robbing me of the credit of my labours—sneered at by fools—trampled on by the aristocracy—oh! tut, tut, tut—fie on it all!"

* * * * *

"Have you seen the morning papers, Mr Stafford?"

"Not I, indeed. Sick of their cant—lies—tergiver-

sation—scurrility. I've laid an embargo on them all. I won't let one come to my house for a fortnight. 'Tis adding fuel to the fire that is consuming me."

"Ah, but they represent the nation as calling loudly for your reinstatement in office."

"Faugh—let it call! Let them lie on! I've done with them—for the present, at least."

The servant brought up the cards of several of his late colleagues. "Not at home, sirrah!—Harkee—ill—ill," thundered his master. I sat with him nearly an hour longer. Oh, what gall and bitterness tintured every word he uttered! How this chafed and fretted spirit spurned at sympathy, and despised—even acquiescence! He complained heavily of perfidy and ingratitude on the part of many members of the House of Commons; and expressed his solemn determination—should he ever return to power—to visit them with his signal vengeance. His eyes flashed fire, as he recounted the instance of one well-known individual, whom he had paid heavily beforehand for his vote, by a sinecure, and by whom he was, after all, unblushingly "jockeyed," * on the score of the salary being a few pounds per annum less than had been calculated on! "Oh, believe me," he continued, "of all knavish trafficking, there is none like your political trafficking; of all swindlers, your political swindler is the vilest." Before I next saw him, the new ministry had been named, some of the leading members of which were among Mr Stafford's bitterest and most contemptuous enemies, and had spontaneously pledged them-

* "*Jockeying*—terme politique emprunté à l'argot spécial dont se servent les habetués des courses de chevaux et les maquignons."—*French Translator*.

selves to act diametrically opposite to the policy he had adopted. This news was too much for him ; and, full of unutterable fury and chagrin, he hastily left town, and, with all his family, betook himself, for an indefinite period, to a distant part of England. I devoutly hoped that he had now had his surfeit of politics, and would henceforth seek repose in the domestic circle. Lady Emma participated anxiously in that wish ; she doated on her husband more fondly than ever ; and her faded beauty touchingly told with what deep devotion she had identified herself with her husband's interests.

As I am not writing a *life* of Mr Stafford, I must leap over a farther interval of twelve anxious and agitating years. He returned to Parliament, and, for several sessions, shone brilliantly as the leader of the Opposition. Being freed from the trammels of office, his spirits resumed their wonted elasticity, and his health became firmer than it had been for years ; so that there was little necessity for my visiting him on any other footing than that of friendship.

A close observer could not fail to detect the *system* of Mr Stafford's parliamentary tactics. He subordinated every thing to accomplish the great purpose of his life. He took every possible opportunity, in eloquent and brilliant speeches, of familiarizing Parliament, and the country at large, with his own principles ; dexterously contrasting with them the narrow and inconsistent policy of his opponents. He felt that he was daily increasing the number of his partisans, both in and out of the House—and securing a prospect of his speedy return to permanent power. I one day mentioned this feature, and told him I admired the way in which he

gradually *insinuated* himself into the confidence of the country.

“Aha, Doctor!”—he replied briskly—“to borrow one of your own terms—I’m *vaccinating* the nation!”

July—,18.—The star of Stafford again Lord of the Ascendent! This day have the seals of the — office been intrusted to my gifted friend, Stafford, amid the thunders of the Commons, and the universal gratulations of the country. He is virtually the leader of the Cabinet, and has it “all his own way” with the House. Every appearance he makes there is the signal for the perfect tempest of applause—with, however, a few lightning gleams of inveterate hostility. His course is full of dazzling dangers. There are breakers a-head—he must tack about incessantly amid shoals and quicksands. God help him, and give him calmness and self-possession—or he is lost!

I suppose there will be no getting near him, at least to such an insignificant person as myself—unless he should unhappily require my professional services. How my heart beats when I hear it said in society, that he seems to feel most acutely the attacks incessantly made on him—and appears ill every day! Poor Stafford! I wonder how Lady Emma bears all this!

I hear every where, that a tremendous opposition is organizing, countenanced in very high quarters, and that he will have hard work to maintain his ground. He is paramount at present, and laughs his enemies to scorn! His name, coupled with almost idolatrous expressions of homage, is in every one’s mouth of the *varium et mutabile semper*! His pictures are in every shop win-

dow ; dinners are given him every week ; addresses forwarded from all parts of the country ; the freedom of large cities and corporations voted him ; in short, there is scarcely any thing said or done in public, but Mr Stafford's name is coupled with it.

March —, 18—.—Poor Stafford, baited incessantly in the House, night after night. Can he stand ? every body is asking. He has commenced the session swimmingly—as the phrase is. Lady Emma, whom I accidentally met to-day at the house of a patient—herself full of feverish excitement—gives me a sad account of Mr Stafford. Restless nights—incessant sleep-talking—continual indisposition—loss of appetite !

Oh, the pleasures of politics, the sweets of ambition !

Saturday.—A strange hint in one of the papers to-day about Mr Stafford's unaccountable freaks in the House, and treatment of various members. What *can* it mean ? A fearful suspicion glanced across my mind—Heaven grant it may be groundless !—on coupling with this dark newspaper hint an occurrence which took place some short time ago. It was this : Lady Amelia —— was suddenly taken ill at a ball given by the Duke of ——, and I was called in to attend her. She had swooned in the midst of the dance, and continued hysterical for some time after her removal home. I asked her what had occasioned it all—and she told me that she happened to be passing, in the dance, a part of the room where Mr Stafford stood, who had looked in for a few minutes to speak to the Marquis of —— . “ He was standing in a thoughtful attitude,” she continued, “ and, somehow or another, I attracted his attention in passing, and he gave me one

of the most fiendish scowls, accompanied with a frightful glare of the eye, I ever encountered. It passed from his face in an instant, and was succeeded by a smile, as he nodded repeatedly to persons who saluted him. The look he gave me haunted me, and, added to the exhaustion I felt from the heat of the room, occasioned my swooning." Though I felt faint at heart while listening to her, I laughed it off, and said it must have been fancy. "No, no, Doctor, it was not," she replied, "for the Marchioness of —— saw it too, and no later than this very morning, when she called, asked me if I had affronted Mr Stafford."

Could it be so? Was this "look" really a transient ghastly out-flashing of insanity? Was his great mind beginning to stagger under the mighty burden it bore? The thought agitated me beyond measure. When I coupled the incident in question with the mysterious hint in the daily paper, my fears were awfully corroborated. I resolved to call upon Mr Stafford that very evening. I was at his house about eight o'clock, but found he had left a little while before for Windsor. The next morning, however—Sunday—his servant brought me word that Mr Stafford would be glad to see me between eight and ten o'clock in the evening. Thither, therefore, I repaired, about half-past eight. On sending up my name, his private secretary came down stairs, and conducted me to the minister's library—a spacious and richly furnished room. Statues stood in the window-places, and busts of British statesmen in the four corners. The sides were lined with book-shelves, filled with elegantly bound volumes; and a large table in the middle of the room was covered with tape-tied packets,

opened and unopened letters, &c. A large bronze lamp was suspended from the ceiling, and threw a peculiarly rich and mellow light over the whole—and especially the figure of Mr Stafford, who, in his long crimson silk dressing-gown, was walking rapidly to and fro, with his arms folded on his breast. The first glance showed me that he was labouring under high excitement. His face was pale, and his brilliant eyes glanced restlessly from beneath his intensely knit brows.

“My dear Doctor—an age since I saw you!—Here I am—overwhelmed, you see, as usual!” said he, cordially taking me by the hand, and leading me to a seat.—“My dear sir, you give yourself no rest—you are actually—you are *rapidly* destroying yourself!” said I, after he had, in his own brief, energetic, and pointed language, described a train of symptoms bordering on those of brain-fever. He had, unknown to any one, latterly taken to opium, which he swallowed by stealth, in large quantities, on retiring to bed; and I need hardly say how that of itself was sufficient to derange the functions both of body and mind. He had lost his appetite, and felt consciously sinking every day into a state of the utmost langour and exhaustion—so much so, that he was reluctant often to rise and dress, or go out. His temper, he said, began to fail him, and he grew fretful and irritable with every body, and on every occasion. “Doctor, Doctor! I don’t know whether you’ll understand me or not—but every thing GLARES at me!” said he. “Every object grows suddenly invested with personality—animation—I can’t bear to look at them!—I am oppressed—I breathe a rarified atmosphere!”—“Your nervous system is disturbed, Mr Stafford.”—“I live in

a dim dream—with only occasional intervals of real consciousness. Every thing is false and exaggerated about me. I see, feel, think, through a magnifying medium—in a word, I'm in a strange, unaccountable—terrible state."

"Can you wonder at it—even if it were worse?" said I, expostulating vehemently with him on his incessant, unmitigating application to public business. "Believe me," I concluded with energy, "you must lie by, or be laid by."

"Ah—good, that—terse!—But what's to be done? Must I resign? Must public business stand still in the middle of the session! I've made my bed, and must lie on it."

I really was at a loss what to say. He could not bear "preaching" or "prosing," or any thing approaching to it. I suffered him to go on as he would—detailing more and more symptoms like those above mentioned—clearly enough disclosing to my reluctant eyes, reason holding her reins loosely, unsteadily!

"I can't account for it, Doctor—but I feel sudden fits of wildness sometimes—but for a moment, however—a second!—O, my Creator! I hope all is yet sound *here, here!*" said he, pressing his hand against his forehead. He rose and walked rapidly to and fro. "Excuse me, Doctor, I *cannot* sit still!" said he. * * * "Have I not enough to upset me?—Only listen to a tithe of my troubles, now!—After paying almost servile court to a parcel of Parliamentary puppies, ever since the commencement of the session, to secure their votes on the — Bill—having the boobies here to dine with me, and then dining with them, week after week—sitting

down gaily with fellows whom I utterly, unutterably despise—every one of the pack suddenly turned tail on me—stole, stole, stole away—every one—and left me in a ridiculous minority of 43!”—I said it was a sample of the annoyances inseparable from office.—“ Ay, ay, ay !” he replied with impetuous bitterness, increasing the pace at which he was walking. “ Why—*why* is it, that public men have no principle—no feeling—no gratitude—no sympathy ?” He paused. I said, mildly, that I hoped the throng of the session was nearly got through, that his embarrassments would diminish, and he would have some leisure on his hands.

“ Oh, no, no, no !—my difficulties and perplexities increase and thicken on every side ! Great heavens ! how are we to get on ? All the motions of government are impeded ; we are hemmed in—blocked up on every side—the state vessel is surrounded with closing crashing icebergs ! I think I must quit the helm ! Look here, for instance : after ransacking all the arts and resources of diplomacy, I had, with infinite difficulty, succeeded in devising a scheme for adjusting our —— differences. Several of the continental powers have acquiesced—all was going on well—when, this very morning, comes a courier to Downing Street, bearing a civil hint from the Austrian cabinet, that, if I persevered with my project, such a procedure would be considered equivalent to a declaration of war ! So *there* we are at a dead stand ! ’Tis all that execrable Metternich ! Subtle devil !—*He’s* at the bottom of all the disturbances in Europe ! Again—here, at home, we are all on our backs ! I stand pledged to the —— Bill. I will, and must go through with it. My consistency, popularity, place—

all are at stake ! I'm *bound* to carry it ! and only yesterday the —, and —, and — families—'gad ! half the Upper House—have given me to understand I must give up them, or the — Bill ! And then we are all at daggers-drawn among ourselves—a cabinet-council like a cock-pit, — and — eternally bickering ! And again—last night his Majesty behaved with marked coolness and hauteur : and, while sipping his claret, told me, with stern *sang froid*, that HIS consent to the — Bill was 'utterly out of the question.' I must throw overboard the —, a measure that I have more at heart than any other ! It is whispered that — is determined to draw me into a duel ; and, as if all this were not enough, I am perpetually receiving threats of assassination ; and, in fact, a bullet hissed close past my hat the other day, while on horseback, on my way to — ! I can't make the thing public—'tis impossible ; and perhaps the very next hour I move out, I may be shot through the heart ! O God ! *what* is to become of me ? Would to heaven I had refused the seals of the — office ! Doctor, do you think—the nonsense of medicine apart—do you think you can do any thing for me ? Any thing to quiet the system—to cool the brain ? Would bleeding do ?—Bathing ?—What ? But mind I've not much time for physic ; I'm to open the — question to-morrow night ; and then every hour to dictate fifteen or twenty letters ! In a word"—

"Lord —,* sir," said the servant, appearing at the door.

"Ah, execrable coxcomb !" he muttered to me. "I know what he is come about—he has badgered me in-

* "Le Colonel *O'Morven*," says the French Translator.

cessantly for the last six weeks ! I won't see him. Not at home !" he called out to the servant. He paused. " Stay, sirrah !—beg his Lordship to walk up stairs." Then to me—" The man can command his two brothers' votes—I must have them to-morrow night. Doctor, we must part"—hearing approaching footsteps. " I've been raving like a madman, I fear—but not a word to any one breathing ! Ah, my Lord ! good evening—good evening !" said he, with a gaiety and briskness of tone and manner that utterly confounded me—walking and meeting his visiter half-way, and shaking him by the hands. Poor Stafford ! I returned to my own quiet home, and devoutly thanked God, who had shut *me* out from such splendid misery as I witnessed in the Right Honourable Charles Stafford.

Tuesday.—Poor Stafford spoke splendidly in the House, last night, for upwards of three hours ; and, at the bottom of the reported speech, a note was added, informing the reader, that " Mr Stafford was looking better than they had seen him for some months, and seemed to enjoy excellent spirits." How little did he who penned that note suspect the true state of matters—that Mr Stafford owed his " better looks" and " excellent spirits" to an intoxicating draught of raw brandy, which alone enabled him to face the House. I read his speech with agonizing interest ; it was full of flashing fancy, and powerful argumentative eloquence, and breathed throughout a buoyant, elastic spirit, which nothing seemed capable of overpowering or depressing. But Mr Stafford might have saved his trouble and anxiety—for he was worsted, and his bill lost by an overwhelming

majority ! Oh ! could his relentless opponents have seen but a glimpse of what I had seen, they would have spared their noble victim the sneers and railleries with which they pelted him throughout the evening.

Friday.—I this afternoon had an opportunity of conversing confidentially with Mr Stafford's private secretary, who corroborated my worst fears, by communicating his own, and their reasons, amounting to infallible evidence, that Mr Stafford was beginning to give forth scintillations of *madness*. He would sometimes totally lose his recollection of what he had done during the day, and dictate three answers to the same letter. He would, at the public office, sometimes enter into a strain of conversation with his astounded underlings, so absurd and imprudent—disclosing the profoundest secrets of state—as must have inevitably and instantly ruined him, had he not been surrounded by those who were personally attached to him. Mr —— communicated various other little symptoms of the same kind. Mr Stafford was once on his way down to the House, in his dressing-gown, and could be persuaded with the utmost difficulty only to return and change it. He would sometimes go down to his country house, and receive his lady and children with such an extravagant—such a frantic—display of spirit and gaiety, as at first delighted, then surprised, and finally alarmed Lady Emma into a horrid suspicion of the real state of her husband's mind.

I was surprised early one morning by his coachman's calling at my house, and desiring to see me alone ; and, when he was shown into my presence, with a flurried manner, many apologies for his "boldness," and entreaties

—somewhat Hibernian, to be sure, in the wording—that I “*would take no notice whatever* of what he said,” he told me that his master’s conduct had latterly been “very odd and queer-like.” That, on getting into his carriage, on his return from the House, Mr Stafford would direct him to drive five or six miles into the country, at the top of his speed—then back again—then to some distant part of London—without once alighting, and with no apparent object ; so that it was sometimes five or six, or even seven o’clock in the morning before they got home ! “Last night, sir,” he added, “master did ‘som’mut uncommon ‘stroordinary : he told me to drive to Greenwich ; and, when I gets there, he bids me pull up at the —, and get him a draught of ale—and then he drinks a sup, and tells me and John to finish it, and then turn the horses’ heads back again for town !” I gave the man half-a-guinea, and solemnly enjoined him to keep what he had told me a profound secret.

What was to be done ?—what steps could we take ?—how deal with such a public man as Mr Stafford ? I felt myself in a fearful dilemma. Should I communicate candidly with Lady Emma ? I thought it better, on the whole, to wait a little longer ; and was delighted to find, that, as public business slackened a little, and Mr Stafford carried several favourite measures very successfully, and with comparatively little effort, he intermitted his attention to business, and was persuaded into spending the recess at the house of one of his relatives, a score or two miles from town, whose enchanting house and grounds, and magnificent hospitalities, served to occupy Mr Stafford’s mind with bustling and pleasurable thoughts. Such a fortnight’s interval did wonders for

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him. Lady Emma, whom I had requested to write frequently to me about him, represented things more and more cheerfully in every succeeding letter—saying, that the “distressing *flightiness*,”* which Mr Stafford had occasionally evinced in town, had totally disappeared; that everybody at — House was astonished at the elasticity and joyousness of his spirits, and the energy, almost amounting to enthusiasm, with which he entered into the glittering gaieties and festivities that were going on around him. “He was the life and soul of the party.” He seemed determined to banish business from his thoughts, at least for a while; and when a chance allusion was made to it, would put it off gaily with—“Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.” All this filled me with consolation. I dismissed the apprehensions which had latterly harassed my mind concerning him, and heartily thanked God that Mr Stafford’s splendid powers seemed likely to be yet long spared to the country—that the hovering fiend was beaten off from his victim—might it be for ever!

The House at length resumed; Mr Stafford returned to town, and all his weighty cares again gathered around him. Hardly a few days had elapsed, before he delivered one of the longest, calmest, most argumentative speeches which had ever fallen from him. Indeed, it began to be commonly remarked, that all he said in the House wore a matter-of-fact, business-like air, which nobody could have expected from him. All this was encouraging. The measure which he brought forward in

* “Les Anglais ont le mot ‘*flightiness*,’ fuite, légèreté de l’esprit: expression très remarquable dans sa justesse, et sans équivalent en Français.”—*French Translator*.

the speech last alluded to, was hotly contested, inch by inch, in the House, and at last, contrary even to his own expectations, carried, though by an inconsiderable majority. All his friends congratulated him on his triumph.

“ Yes, I HAVE triumphed at last,” he said, emphatically, as he left the House. He went home, late at night, and alarmed—confounded his domestics, by calling them all up, and—it is lamentable to have to record such things of such a man—insisting on their *illuminating* the house—candles in every window—in front and behind ! It was fortunate that Lady Emma and her family had not yet returned from —— House, to witness this unequivocal indication of returning insanity. He himself personally assisted at the ridiculous task of lighting the candles, and putting them in the windows ; and, when it was completed, actually harangued the assembled servants on the signal triumph he and the country had obtained that night in the House of Commons, and concluded by ordering them to extinguish the lights, and adjourn to the kitchen to supper, when he would presently join them, and give them a dozen of wine ! He was as good as his word : yes, Mr Stafford sat at the head of his confounded servants—few in number, on account of the family’s absence—and engaged in the most uproarious hilarity ! Fortunately, most fortunately, his conduct was unhesitatingly attributed to intoxication—in which condition he was really carried to bed at an advanced hour in the morning, by those whom nothing but their bashful fears had saved from being similarly overcome by the wine they had been drinking. All this was told me by the coachman, who had communicated with me formerly—and with tears, for he was an old and faithful ser-

vant. He assiduously kept up among his fellow-servants the notion that their master's drunkenness was the cause of his extraordinary behaviour.

I called on him the day after, and found him sitting in his library, dictating to his secretary, whom he directed to withdraw as soon as I entered. He then drew his chair close to mine, and burst into tears.

"Doctor, would you believe it," said he, "I was horribly drunk last night—I can't imagine how—and am sure I did something or other very absurd among the servants. I dare not, of course, *ask* any of them—and am positively ashamed to look even my valet in the face!"

"Poh, poh—*Semel insanivimus omnes*," I stammered, attempting to smile, scarcely knowing what to say.

"Don't—don't desert me, Doctor!" he sobbed, clasping my hand, and looking sorrowfully in my face—"Don't *you* desert me, my tried friend. Every body is forsaking me! The King hates me—the Commons despise me—the people would have my blood, if they dared! And yet why?—What have I done? God knows, I have done every thing for the best—indeed, indeed I have!" he continued, grasping my hand in silence.

"There's a terrible plot hatching against me!—Hush!" He rose, and bolted the door. "Did you see that fellow whom I ordered out on your entrance?"—naming his private secretary—"Well, that infamous fellow thinks he is to succeed me in my office, and has actually gained over the King and several of the aristocracy to his interest!"

"Nonsense—nonsense—stuff!—You have *wine* in

your head, Mr Stafford," said I, angrily, trying to choke down my emotions.

"No, no—sober enough now, Doctor ——. I'll tell you what (albeit unused to the melting mood) has thus overcome me: Lady Emma favours the scoundrel! They correspond! My children, even, are gained over! —But Emma, my wife, my love, who could have thought it!" * * * I succeeded in calming him, and he began to converse on different subjects, although the fiend was manifest again. "Doctor ——, I'll intrust you with a secret—a state secret! You must know that I have long entertained the idea of uniting all the European states into one vast republic, and have at last arranged a scheme which will, I think, be unhesitatingly adopted. I have written to Prince —— on the subject, and expect his answer soon! Isn't it a grand thought!" I assented, of course. "It will emblazon my name in the annals of eternity, beyond all Roman and all Grecian fame," he continued, waving his hand oratorically; "but I've been—yes, yes—premature!—My secret is safe with you, Doctor ——?"

"Oh, certainly!" I replied, with a melancholy air, uttering a deep sigh.

"But now to business. I'll tell you why I've sent for you." I had called unasked, as the reader will recollect. "I'll tell you," he continued, taking my hand affectionately:—"Dr ——, I have known you now for many years, ever since we were at Cambridge together," (my heart ached at the recollection,) "and we have been good friends ever since. I have noticed that you have never asked a favour from me since I knew you. Every one else has teased me—but I have never had a request

preferred me from you, my dear friend." He burst into tears, mine very nearly overflowing. There was no longer any doubt that Mr Stafford—the great, the gifted Mr Stafford—was sitting before me in a state of idiocy! —of MADNESS! I felt faint and sick as he proceeded. "Well, I thank God I have it now in my power to reward you—to offer you something that will fully show the love I bear you, and my unlimited confidence in your talents and integrity. I have determined to recall our ambassador at the Court of —, and shall supply his place"—he looked at me with a good-natured smile—"by my friend Dr —!" He leaned back in his chair, and eyed me with a triumphant, a gratified air, evidently preparing himself to be overwhelmed with my thanks. In one instant, however, "a change came o'er the aspect of his dream." His features grew suddenly disturbed, now flushed, now pale; his manner grew restless and embarrassed; and I felt convinced that a lucid interval had occurred, that a consciousness of his having been either saying or doing something very absurd, had that instant flashed across his mind! "Ah, I see, Dr —," he resumed, in an altered tone, speaking hesitatingly, while a vivid glance shot from his eye into my very soul, as though he would see whether I had detected the process of thought which had passed through his mind, "you look surprised—ha, ha!—and well you may! But now I'll explain the riddle. You must know that Lord — is expecting to be our new ambassador, and, in fact, I *must* offer it him; but—but—I wish to pique him into declining it, when I'll take offence—by—telling him—hinting carelessly, that one of my friends had the prior refusal of it!"

Did not the promptitude and plausibility of this pretext savour of madness? He hinted, soon after, that he had much business in hand, and I withdrew. I fell back in my carriage, and resigned myself to bitter and agonizing reflections on the scene I had just quitted. What was to be done? Mr Stafford, by some extravagant act, might commit himself frightfully with public affairs.

Lady Emma, painful as the task was, must be written to. Measures MUST now be had recourse to. The case admitted of no farther doubt. Yes—this great—this unfortunate man must be put into constraint, and that immediately. In the tumult of my thoughts, I scarcely knew what to decide on; but, at last, I ordered the man to drive to the houses of Sir —, and Dr —, and consult with them on the proper course to be pursued.

* * * * *

Oh, God!—Oh, horror!—Oh, my unhappy soul!—Despair! Hark—what do I hear?—Do I hear aright—

* * * * *

Have I SEEN aright—or is it all a dream?—Shall I wake to-morrow, and find it false? *

* The following is the concluding note of the French Translator, which is here copied *verbatim*:—

“NOTE DU TRAD.—La première partie de cette esquisse si touchante semble se rapporter à *M. Canning* : la dernière à Lord Castle-reagh. Quel que soit au surplus ‘l’homme politique,’ dont l’auteur de ces souvenirs a voulu parler, nous ne doutons pas de la vérité de son récit. Ces articles, dont nous publierons la suite, ont excité de nombreuses réclamations en Angleterre. Plus d’une famille s’est plainte de l’indiscrétion de l’auteur. On a prétendu qu’en trahissant les mystères de la vie privée que sa pratique lui a fait connaître, il

avait violé les lois imposées par la morale, *la religion du médecin*. Les couleurs employées par l'écrivain sont d'ailleurs d'une réalité frappante. CHATHAM est mort, épuisé par ses travaux parlementaires ; il est tombé sans connaissance en prononçant son dernier discours à la Chambre des Lords. SHERIDAN et BURKE avaient l'intelligence affaiblie quand ils ont expiré. CASTLEREAGH et SAMUEL ROMILLY se sont donné la mort. CANNING a péri dévoré par ses anxiétés d'homme d'état."

CHAPTER IV.

A SLIGHT COLD.

CONSIDER “a slight cold” to be in the nature of a chill, caught by a sudden contact with your grave; or as occasioned by the damp finger of Death laid upon you, as it were, to mark you for HIS, in passing to the more immediate object of his commission. Let this be called croaking, and laughed at as such, by those who are “awearied of the painful round of life,” and are on the look-out for their dismissal from it; but be learnt off by heart, and remembered as having the force and truth of gospel, by all those who would “measure out their span upon the earth,” and are conscious of any constitutional flaw or feebleness; who are distinguished by any such tendency death-ward, as long necks—narrow, chicken chests—very fair complexions—exquisite sympathy with atmospheric variations; or, in short, exhibit any symptoms of an asthmatic or consumptive character—IF they choose to NEGLECT A SLIGHT COLD.

Let not those complain of being bitten by a reptile, which they have cherished to maturity in their very bosoms, when they might have crushed it in the egg!

Now, if we call “a slight cold” the egg,* and pleurisy—inflammation of the lungs—asthma—CONSUMPTION, the venomous reptile—the matter will be no more than correctly figured. There are many ways in which this “egg” may be deposited and hatched. Going suddenly, slightly clad, from a heated into a cold atmosphere, especially if you can contrive to be in a state of perspiration—sitting or standing in a *draught*, however slight—it is the breath of Death, reader, and laden with the vapours of the grave! Lying in damp beds, for there his cold arms shall embrace you—continuing in wet clothing, and neglecting wet feet—these, and a hundred others, are some of the ways in which you may slowly, imperceptibly, but surely, cherish the creature, that shall at last creep inextricably inwards, and lie coiled about your very vitals. Once more, again—again—again—I would say, ATTEND to this, all ye who think it a small matter to—NEGLECT A SLIGHT COLD!

So many painful—I may say dreadful illustrations of the truth of the above remarks, are strewn over the pages of my Diary, that I scarcely know which of them to select. The following melancholy “instance” will, I hope, prove as impressive, as I think it interesting.

Captain C—— had served in the Peninsular campaigns with distinguished merit; and, on the return of the British army, sold out, and determined to enjoy in private life an ample fortune bequeathed him by a distant relative. At the period I am speaking of, he was in his twenty-ninth or thirtieth year; and, in person, one of the very finest men I ever saw in my life. There

* *Omnium prope quibus affligimur morborum origo et quasi semen*, says an intelligent medical writer of the last century.

was an air of ease and frankness about his demeanour, dashed with a little pensiveness, which captivated every body with whom he conversed—but the ladies especially. It seemed the natural effect produced on a bold but feeling heart, by frequent scenes of sorrow. Is not such a one formed to win over the heart of woman? Indeed, it seemed so; for, at the period I am speaking of, our English ladies were absolutely infatuated about the military; and a man who had otherwise but little chance, had only to appear in regimentals, to turn the scale in his favour. One would have thought the race of soldiery was about to become suddenly extinct; for in almost every third marriage that took place within two years of the magnificent event at Waterloo—whether rich or poor, high or low—a *redcoat* was sure to be the “principal performer.” Let the reader then, being apprized of this influenza—for what else was it?—set before his imagination the tall, commanding figure of Captain C——, his frank and noble bearing—his excellent family—his fortune, upwards of four thousand a-year—and calculate the chances in his favour!

I met him several times in private society, during his stay in town, and have his image vividly in my eye, as he appeared on the last evening we met. He wore a blue coat, white waistcoat, and an ample black neckerchief. His hair was very light, and disposed with natural grace over a remarkably fine forehead, the left corner of which bore the mark of a slight sabre cut. His eye, bright hazel—clear and full—which you would, in your own mind, instantly compare to that of

Mars—to threaten and command,
was capable of an expression of the most winning and

soul-subduing tenderness. Much more might I say in his praise, and truly—but that I have a melancholy end in view. Suffice it to add, that, wherever he moved, he seemed the sun of the social circle, gazed on by many a soft starlike eye, with trembling rapture—the envied object of

Nods, becks, and wreathed smiles,
from all that was fair and beautiful.

He could not remain long disengaged. Intelligence soon found its way to town, of his having formed an attachment to Miss Ellen —, a wealthy and beautiful northern heiress, whose heart soon surrendered to its skilful assailant. Every body was pleased with the match, and pronounced it suitable in all respects. I had an opportunity of seeing Captain C—— and Miss —— together at an evening party in London; for the young lady's family spent the season in town, and were, of course, attended by the Captain, who took up his quarters in —— Street. A handsome couple they looked.

This was nearly twelve months after their engagement; and most of the preliminaries had been settled on both sides, and the event was fixed to take place within a fortnight of Miss —— and family's return to —— shire. The last day of their stay in town, they formed a large and gay water party, and proceeded up the river a little beyond Richmond, in a beautiful open boat, belonging to Lord ——, a cousin of the Captain's. It was rather late before their return; and, long ere their arrival at Westminster Stairs, the wind and rain combined against the party, and assailed them with a fury, against which their awning formed but an insufficient protection. Captain C—— had taken an oar for the last few miles;

and, as they had to pull against a strong tide, his task was not a trifling one. When he resigned his oar, he was in a perfect bath of perspiration; but he drew on his coat, and resumed the seat he had formerly occupied beside Miss —, at the back of the boat. The awning unfortunately got rent immediately behind where they sat; and, what with the splashing of the water on his back, and the squally gusts of wind which incessantly burst upon them, Captain C—— got thoroughly wet and chilled. Miss — grew uneasy about him; but he laughed off her apprehensions, assuring her that they were groundless, and that he was “too old a soldier” to suffer from such a trifling thing as a little “wind and wet.” On leaving the boat, he insisted on accompanying them home to — Square, and stayed there upwards of an hour, busily conversing with them about their departure on the morrow. While there, he took a glass or two of wine, but did not change his clothes. On returning to his lodgings, he was too busily and pleasantly occupied with thoughts about his approaching nuptials, to advert to the necessity of using more precautions against cold, before retiring to bed. He sat down in his dressing-room, without ordering a fire to be lit, and wrote two or three letters; after which he got into bed. Now, how easy it would have been for Captain C—— to obviate any possible ill consequences, by simply ringing for warm water to put his feet in, and a basin of gruel, or posset? He did not do either of these, however; thinking it would be time enough to “cry out when he was hurt.” In the morning he rose, and, though a little indisposed, immediately after breakfast drove to — Square, to see off Miss — and the family; for

it had been arranged that he should remain behind a day or two, in order to complete a few purchases of jewellery, &c., and then follow the party to —shire. He rode on horseback beside their travelling carriage a few miles out of town; and then took his leave and returned. On his way home he called at my house; but, finding me out, left his card, with a request that I would come and see him in the evening. About seven o'clock I was with him. I found him in his dressing-gown, in an easy chair, drinking coffee. He looked rather dejected, and spoke in a desponding tone. He complained of the common symptoms of catarrh; and detailed to me the account which I have just laid before the reader. I remonstrated with him on his last night's imprudence.

"Ah, Doctor —, I wish to Heaven I had rowed on to Westminster, tired as I was!" said he—"Good God, what if I have caught my death of cold?—You cannot conceive how singular my sensations are."

"That's generally the way with patients after the mischief's done," I replied, with a smile. "But come! come! only take care of yourself, and matters are not at all desperate!"

"Heigh ho!"

"Sighing like a furnace," I continued, gaily, on hearing him utter several sighs in succession—"You sons of Mars make hot work of it, both in love and war!"—Again he sighed. "Why, what's the matter, Captain?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing," he replied, languidly; "I suppose a cold generally depresses one's spirits—is it so? Is it a sign of a *severe*?"—

"It is a sign that a certain person"——

"Poh, Doctor, poh!" said he, with an air of lassitude—

“ don’t think me so childish!—I’ll tell you candidly what has contributed to depress my spirits. For this last week or so, I’ve had a strange sort of conviction that ”——

“ Nonsense—none of your nervous fancies ”——

“ Ah, but I *have*, Doctor,” he continued, scarcely noticing the interruption ; “ I have felt a sort of presentiment—a foreboding that—that—*something* or other would occur to prevent my marriage ! ”

“ Oh, tush—tush !—every one has those low nervous fancies that is not accustomed to sickness.”

“ Well—it *may* be so—I hope it may be nothing more ; but I seem to hear a voice whispering—or, at least, to be under an influence to that effect, that the cup will be dashed brimful from my lips—a fearful slip ! It seems as if my Ellen were too great a happiness for the Fates to allow me.”

“ Too great a fiddlestick, Captain !—so your school-boy has a fearful apprehension that he cannot outlive the day of his finally leaving school—too glorious and happy an era ! ”

“ I know well what you allude to—but *mine* is a calm and rational apprehension ”——

“ Come, come, Captain C——, this is going too far. Raillery apart, however, I can fully enter into your feelings,” I continued, perceiving his morbid excitement. “ ’Tis but human nature to feel trepidation and apprehension when approaching some great CRISIS of one’s existence. One is apt to give unfavourable *possibilities* an undue preponderance over *probabilities* ; and it is easily to be accounted for, on the known tendency we find within ourselves, on ordinary occasions, to shape events

according to our *wishes*—and in our over-anxiety to guard against such”——

“ Very metaphysical—very true, I dare say”——

“ Well—to be matter-of-fact—I had all your feelings—perhaps greatly aggravated—at the time of my own marriage”——

“ Eh?—indeed?—Had you really?” he enquired, eagerly, laying his hand on mine—continuing, with an air of anxious curiosity—“ Did you ever feel a sort of conviction that some mysterious agency was awaiting your approach towards the critical point, and, when just within reach of your object, would suddenly smite you down?”

“ Ay, to be sure,” said I, smiling; “ a mere flutter of feeling—which you see others have besides yourself; but that *you*—trained to confront danger—change—casualties of all sorts—that *you*—you, with your frame of Herculean build”——

“ Well—a truce to your banter!” he interrupted me, somewhat impatiently; “ I shouldn’t mind taking you ten to one that I don’t live to be married, after all!”

“ Come, this amounts to a symptom of your indisposition. You have got more fever on you than I thought—and you grow lightheaded!—you must really get to bed, and, in the morning, all these fantasies will be gone.”

“ Well—I hope in God they may! But they horribly oppress me! I own that, latterly, I’ve given in a little to *fatalism*.”

This won’t do at all, thought I, taking my pen in hand, and beginning to write a prescription.

“ Are you thirsty at all? any *catching* in the side when you breathe? any cough?” &c. &c. said I, asking

him the usual routine of questions. I feared, from the symptoms he described, that he had caught a very severe, and, possibly, obstinate cold—so I prescribed active medicines. Amongst others, I recollect ordering him one-fourth of a grain of *tartarized antimony* every four hours, for the purpose of encouraging the insensible perspiration, and thereby determining the fever outwards. I then left him, promising to call about noon the next day, expressing my expectations of finding him perfectly recovered from his indisposition. I found him the following morning in bed, thoroughly under the influence of the medicines I had prescribed, and, in fact, much better in every respect. The whole surface of his body was damp and clammy to the touch, and he had exactly the proper sensation of nausea—both occasioned by the antimony. I contented myself with prescribing a repetition of the medicines.

“ Well, Captain, and what has become of your gloomy forebodings of last night ? ” I enquired, with a smile.

“ Why—hem ! I’m certainly not quite so desponding as I was last night ; but still, the goal—the goal’s not reached yet ! I’m not *well* yet—and, even if I were, there’s a good fortnight’s space for contingencies ! ” * * I enjoined him to keep house for a day or two longer, and persevere with the medicines during that time, in order to his complete recovery, and he reluctantly acquiesced. He had written to inform Miss —, that owing to “ a slight cold,” and his jeweller’s disappointing him about the trinkets he had promised, his stay in town would be prolonged two or three days. This circumstance had fretted and worried him a good deal.

One of the few enjoyments which my professional

engagements permitted me, was the opera, where I might, for a while, forget the plodding realities of life, and wander amid the magnificent regions of music and imagination. Few people, indeed, are so disposed to "make the most" of their time at the opera as medical men, to whom it is a sort of stolen pleasure; they sit on thorns, liable to be summoned out immediately—to exchange the bright scenes of fairyland for the dreary bedside of sickness and death. I may not, perhaps, speak the feelings of my more phlegmatic brethren; but the considerations above named always occasion me to sit listening to what is going on in a state of painful suspense and nervousness, which is aggravated by the slightest noise at the box-door—by the mere trying of the handle. On the evening of the day in question, a friend of my wife's had kindly allowed us the use of her box; and we were both sitting in our places at a musical banquet of unusual splendour; for it was Catalani's benefit. In looking round the house, during the interval between the opera and the ballet, I happened to cast my eye towards the opposite box, at the moment it was entered by two gentlemen of very fashionable appearance. Fancying that the person of one of them was familiar to me, I raised my glass, my sight being rather short. I almost let it fall out of my hand with astonishment—for one of the gentlemen was—Captain C——!—he whom I had that morning left in bed! Scarcely believing that I had seen aright, I redirected my glass to the same spot—but there was no mistaking the stately and handsome person of my patient. There he stood, with the gay, and even rather flustered air of one who has but recently adjourned thither from the wine-table!

He seemed in very high spirits—his face flushed—chatting incessantly with his companion, and smiling and nodding frequently towards persons in various parts of the house. Concern and wonder at his rashness—his madness—in venturing out under such circumstances, kept me for some time breathless. Could I really be looking at my patient, Captain C——?—him whom I had left in bed, under the influence of strong sudorifics?—who had faithfully promised that he would keep within doors for two or three days longer? What had induced him to transgress the order of his medical attendant—thus to put matters in a fair train for verifying his own gloomy apprehensions expressed but the evening before?—Thoughts like these made me so uneasy, that, after failing to attract his eye, I resolved to go round to his box and remonstrate with him. After tapping at the door several times without being heard, on account of the loud tones in which they were laughing and talking, the door was opened.

“ Good God ! Doctor —— ! ” exclaimed Captain C——, in amazement, rising and giving me his hand. “ Why, what on earth is the matter ? What has brought you here ? Is any thing wrong ? Heavens ! have you heard any thing about Miss —— ? ” he continued, all in a breath, turning pale.

“ Not a breath—not a word—But what has brought you here, Cap—— ? Are you stark staring mad ? ” I replied, as I resumed grasping his hand, which was even then damp and clammy.

“ Why—why—nothing particular,” he stammered, startled by my agitated manner. “ What is there so very wonderful in my coming to the opera ? Have I done wrong, eh ? ” he enquired, after a pause.

“ You have acted like a *madman*, Captain C——, in venturing even out of your bedroom, while under influence of the medicines you were taking !”

“ Oh, nonsense, my dear Doctor—nonsense ! What harm can there be ? I felt infinitely better after you left me this morning ;” and he proceeded to explain, that his companion, to whom he introduced me, was Lieutenant ——, the brother of his intended bride ; that he had that morning arrived in town from Portsmouth, had called on the Captain, and, after drinking a glass or two of champagne, and forcing the Captain to join him, had prevailed on him to accompany him to dinner at his hotel. Lieutenant —— overcame all his scruples—laughed at the idea of his “ slight cold,” and said it would be “ unkind to refuse the brother of Ellen !”—so, after dinner, they both adjourned to the opera. I nodded towards the door, and we both left the box for a moment or two.

“ Why, Doctor ——, you don’t mean to say that I’m running any *real* risk ?” he enquired, with some trepidation. “ What *could* I do, you know, when the Lieutenant there—only just returned from his cruise—Ellen’s brother, you know”—

“ Excuse me, Captain ——. Did you take the medicines I ordered, regularly, up to the time of your going out ?” I enquired, anxiously.

“ To be sure I did — punctual as clockwork ; and, egad ! now, I think of it,” he added, eagerly, “ I took a *double* dose of the powders, just before leaving my room, by way of making ‘ assurance doubly sure,’ you know—ha, ha ! Right, eh !

“ Have you perspired during the day, as usual ?”

“ Oh, profusely—profusely ! Egad, I must have sweated all the fever out long ago, I think ! I hadn’t been in the open air half an hour, when my skin was as dry as yours—as dry as ever it was in my life. Nay, in fact, I felt rather chilled than otherwise.”

“ Allow me, Captain—did you drink much at dinner ? ”

“ Why—I own—I think I’d my share ; these tars, you know—such cursed soakers ”——

“ Let me feel your pulse,” said I. It was full and thrilling, beating upwards of one hundred a minute. My looks, I suppose, alarmed him ; for, while I was feeling his pulse, he grew very pale, and leaned against the box-door, saying, in a fainter tone than before, “ I’m afraid I’ve done wrong in coming out. Your looks alarm me.”

“ You have certainly acted very—very imprudently ; but I hope the mischief is not irremediable,” said I, in as cheerful a tone as I could, for I saw that he was growing excessively agitated. “ At all events, *if* you’ll take my advice ”——

“ *If* !—there’s no need of taunting me ”——

“ Well, then, you’ll return home instantly, and muffle yourself up in your cloak as closely as possible.”

“ I will ! By the way, do you remember the bet I offered you ? ” said he, with a sickly smile, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. “ I—I—fear you may take it, *and win* ! Good God ! what evil star is over me ? Would to Heaven this Lieutenant —— had never crossed my path !—I’ll return home this instant, and do all you recommend ; and, for God’s sake, call early in the morning, whether I send for you or not !—By —— !

your looks and manner have nearly given me the brain fever!"—I took my leave, promising to be with him early; and advising him to take a warm bath the moment it could be procured—to persevere with the powders—and lie in bed till I called. But, alas ! alas ! alas ! the mischief had been DONE !

" Dear me, what a remarkably fine-looking man that Captain C—— is," said my wife, as soon as I had re-seated myself beside her.

" He is a *dead* man, my love, if you like !" I replied, with a melancholy air. The little incident just recorded made me too sad to sit out the ballet, so we left very early, and I do not think we interchanged more than a word or two in going home ; and those *were*, " Poor Miss —— ?"—" Poor Captain C—— !" I do not pretend to say that even the rash conduct of Captain C——, and its probable consequences, could, in every instance, warrant such gloomy fears ; but, in his case, I felt, with himself, a sort of *superstitious* apprehension, I knew not why.

I found him, on calling in the morning, exhibiting the incipient symptoms of inflammation of the lungs. He complained of increasing difficulty of breathing—a sense of painful oppression and constriction all over his chest, and a hard harassing cough, attended with excruciating pain. His pulse quivered and thrilled under the finger, like a tense harp-string after it has been twanged ; the whole surface of his body was dry and heated ; his face was flushed, and full of anxiety. A man of his robust constitution, and plethoric habit, was one of the very worst subjects of inflammation ! I took from the arm, myself, a very large quantity of blood—which presented

the usual appearance in such cases—and prescribed active lowering remedies. But neither these measures, nor the application of a large blister in the evening—when I again saw him—seemed to make any impression on the complaint, so I ordered him to be bled again. Poor Captain C——! From that morning he prepared himself for a fatal termination of his illness, and lamented, in the most passionate terms, that he had not acted up to my advice in time!

On returning home from my evening visit, I found an express, requiring my instant attendance on a lady of distinction in the country, an old patient of mine; and was obliged to hurry off, without having time to do more than commit the care of Captain C——, and another case equally urgent, to Dr D——, a friend of mine close by, imploring him to keep up the most active treatment with the Captain; and promising him that I should return during the next day. I was detained in the country for two days, during which I scarcely left Lady ——'s bedroom an instant; and before I left for town, she expired, under heart-rending circumstances. On returning to town, I found several urgent cases requiring my instant attention; and, first and foremost, that of poor Captain C——. Dr D—— was out, so I hurried to my patient's bedside at once. It cannot injure any one, at this distance of time, to state plainly, that the poor Captain's case had been most deplorably mismanaged during my absence. It was owing to no fault of my friend Dr D——, who had done his utmost, and had his own large practice to attend to. He was therefore under the necessity of committing the case to the more immediate superintendence of a young and inexperienced

member of the profession, who, in his ignorance and timidity, threw aside the only chances for Captain C——'s life—repeated blood-letting. Only *once* did Mr —— bleed him, and then took away about four ounces ! Under the judicious management of Dr D——, the inroads of the inflammation had been sensibly checked; but it rallied again, and made head against the languid resistance continued by the young apothecary; so that I arrived but in time to witness the closing scene.

He was absolutely withering under the fever: the difficulty with which he drew his breath amounted almost to suffocation. He had a dry hacking cough—the oppression of his chest was greater than ever; and what he expectorated was of a *black* colour ! He was delirious, and did not know me. He fancied himself on the river rowing—then endeavouring to protect Miss —— from the inclemency of the weather; and the expressions of moving tenderness which he coupled with her name, were heart-breaking. Then, again, he thought himself in ——shire, superintending the alterations of his house, which was getting ready for their reception on their marriage. He mentioned *my* name, and said, “What a gloomy man that Dr —— is, Ellen ! he keeps one stewing in bed for a week, if one has but a common cold !”

Letters were despatched into ——shire, to acquaint his family, and that of Miss ——, with the melancholy tidings of his dangerous illness. Several of his relations soon made their appearance; but as Miss ——'s party did not go direct home, but staid a day or two on the way, I presume the letters reached —— House long before their arrival, and were not seen by the family before poor Captain C—— had expired.

I called again on him in the evening. The first glance at his countenance sufficed to show me that he could not survive the night. I found that the cough and spitting had ceased suddenly ; he felt no pain : his feeble, varying pulse, indicated that the powers of nature were rapidly sinking. His lips had assumed a fearfully livid hue, and were occasionally retracted so as to show all his teeth ; and his whole countenance was fallen. He was quite sensible, and aware that he was *dying*. He bore the intelligence with noble fortitude, saying, it was but the fruit of his own imprudence and folly. He several times ejaculated, “ Oh, Ellen—Ellen—Ellen ! ” and shook his head feebly, with a woful despairing look upwards, but without shedding a tear. He was past all display of active emotion !

“ Shouldn’t you call me a *suicide*, Doctor —— ? ” said he, mournfully, on seeing me sitting beside him.

“ Oh, assuredly not ! Dismiss such thoughts, dear Captain, I beg ! We are *all* in the hands of the Almighty, Captain. It is He who orders our ends,” said I, gently grasping his hand, which lay passive on the counterpane. “ Well, I suppose it is so ! His will be done ! ” he exclaimed, looking reverently upwards, and closing his eyes. I rose, and walked to the table, on which stood his medicine, to see how much of it he had taken. *There* lay an unopened letter from Miss —— ! It had arrived by that morning’s post, and bore the post-mark of the town at which they were making their halt by the way. Captain ——’s friends considered it better not to agitate him, by informing him of its arrival ; for as Miss —— could not be apprised of his illness, it might be of a tenor to agitate and tantalize him. My heart ached to see it. I returned presently to my seat beside him.

"Doctor," he whispered, "will you be good enough to look for my white waistcoat—it is hanging in the dressing-room, and feel in the pocket for a little paper-parcel?" I rose, did as he directed, and brought him what he asked for.

"Open it, and you'll see poor Ellen's wedding-ring and guard, which I purchased only a day or two ago. I wish to see them," said he, in a low but firm tone of voice. I removed the wool, and gazed at the glistening trinkets in silence, as did Captain C——.

"They will do to wed me to the *worm*!" said he, extending towards me the little finger of his left hand. The tears nearly blinding me, I did as he wished, but could not get them past the first joint.

"Ah, Ellen has a small finger!" said he. A tear fell from my eye upon his hand. He looked at me for an instant with apparent surprise. "Never mind, Doctor—that will do—I see they won't go farther. Now, let me die with them on; and when I am no more, let them be given to Ellen. I have wedded her in my heart—she is my wife!" He continued gazing fixedly at the finger on which the rings were.

"Of course, she cannot know of my illness?" he enquired faintly, looking at me. I shook my head.

"Good. 'Twill break her little heart, I'm afraid!" Those were the last words I ever heard him utter; for, finding that my feelings were growing too excited, and that the Captain seemed disposed to sleep, I rose and left the room, followed by Lieutenant ——, who had been sitting at his friend's bedside all day long, and looked dreadfully pale and exhausted. "Doctor," said he, in a broken voice, as we stood together in the hall, "I have

murdered my friend, and he thinks I have. He won't speak to me, nor look at me! He hasn't opened his lips to me once, though I've been at his bedside night and day. Yes," he continued, almost choking, "I've murdered him; and what is to become of my *sister*?" I made him no reply, for my heart was full.

In the morning I found Captain C—— *laid out*; for he had died about midnight.

Few scenes are fraught with more solemnity and awe, none more chilling to the heart, than the chamber of the recent dead. It is like the cold porch of eternity! The sepulchral silence, the dim light, the fearful order and repose of all around—a sick-room, as it were, suddenly changed into a charnel-house—the central object in the gloomy picture, the bed—the yellow effigy of him *that was*, looking coldly out from the white unruffled sheets—the lips that must speak no more—the eyes that are shut for ever!

The features of Captain C—— were calm and composed; but was it not woful to see that fine countenance surrounded with the close crimped cap, injuring its outline and proportions!—Here, reader, lay the victim of
A SLIGHT COLD.

CHAPTER V.

RICH AND POOR.

A REMARKABLE and affecting juxtaposition of the two poles, so to speak, of human condition—affluence and poverty—rank and degradation—came under my notice during the early part of the year 181—. The dispensations of Providence are fearful levellers of the factitious distinctions among men! Little boots it to our common foe, whether he pluck his prey from the downy satin-curtained couch, or the wretched pallet of a prison or a workhouse! The oppressive splendour of rank and riches, indeed!—what has it of solace or mitigation to him bidden “to turn his pale face to the wall”—to look his last on life, its toys and tinselries?

The Earl of ——’s* old tormentor, the gout, had laid close siege to him during the early part of the winter of 181—, and inflicted on him agonies of unusual intensity and duration. It left him in a very low and poor state of health—his spirits utterly broken—and his temper soured and irritable, to an extent that was intolerable to

* Le Duc de ——!—*French Translator.*

those around him. The discussion of a political question, in the issue of which his interests were deeply involved, seduced him into an attendance at the House of Lords, long before he was in a fit state for removal, even from his bedchamber; and the consequences of such a shattered invalid's premature exposure to a bleak winter's wind may be easily anticipated. He was laid again on a bed of suffering; and having, through some sudden pique, dismissed his old family physician, his Lordship was pleased to summon me to supply his place.

The Earl of —— was celebrated for his enormous riches and the more than Oriental scale of luxury and magnificence on which his establishment was conducted. The slanderous world farther gave him credit for a disposition of the most exquisite selfishness, which, added to his capricious and choleric humour, made him a very unenviable companion, even in health. What, then, must such a man be in sickness? I trembled at the task that was before me! It was a bitter December evening on which I paid him my first visit. Nearly the whole of the gloomy, secluded street in which his mansion was situated, was covered with straw; and men were stationed about it to prevent noise in any shape. The ample knocker was muffled and the bell unhung, lest the noise of either should startle the aristocratical invalid. The instant my carriage, with its muffled roll, drew up, the hall-door sprang open, as if by magic; for the watchful porter had orders to anticipate all comers, on pain of instant dismissal. Thick matting was laid over the hall floor—double carpeting covered the staircases and landings, from the top to the bottom of the house—and all the door edges were lined with list. How

could sickness or death presume to enter, in spite of such precautions!

A servant, in large list-slippers, asked me, in a whisper, my name; and, on learning it, said the Countess wished to have a few moments' interview with me, before I was shown up to his Lordship. I was, therefore, led into a magnificent apartment, where her Ladyship with two grown-up daughters, and a young man in the Guards' uniform, sat sipping coffee—for they had but just left the dining-room. The Countess looked pale and dispirited. "Doctor ——," said she, after a few words of course had been interchanged, "I'm afraid you'll have a trying task to manage his Lordship. We are all worn out with attending on him, and yet he says we neglect him! Nothing can please or satisfy him!—What do you imagine was the reason of his dismissing Dr ——? Because he persisted in attributing the present seizure to his Lordship's imprudent visit to the House!"

"Well, your Ladyship knows I can but attempt to do my duty"—I was answering, when, at that instant, the door was opened, and a sleek servant, all pampered and powdered, in a *sotto voce* tone informed the Countess that his Lordship had been enquiring for me. "Oh, for God's sake, go—go immediately," said her Ladyship, eagerly, "or we shall have no peace for a week to come!—I shall, perhaps, follow you in a few minutes!—But mind—please, not a breath about Dr ——'s leaving!" I bowed, and left the room. I followed the servant up the noble staircase—vases and statues, with graceful lamps at every landing—and was presently ushered into the "Bluebeard" chamber. Oh, the sumptuous—

the splendid air of every thing within it! Flowered, festooned satin window-draperies—flowered satin bed-curtains, gathered together at the top by a golden eagle—flowered satin counterpane! Beautiful Brussels muffled the tread of your feet, and delicately-carved chairs and couches solicited to repose! The very chamber lamps, glistening in soft radiance from snowy marble stands in the farther corners of the room, were tasteful and elegant in the extreme. In short, grandeur and elegance seemed to outvie one another, both in the materials and disposition of every thing around me. I never saw any thing like it before, nor have I since. I never in my life sat in such a yielding luxurious chair as the one I was beckoned to, beside the Earl. There was, in a word, every thing calculated to cheat a man into a belief, that he belonged to a “higher order” than that of “poor humanity.”

But for the Lord—the owner of all this—my patient. Ay, there he lay, embedded in down, amid snowy linen and figured satin—all that was visible of him being his little sallow wrinkled visage, worn with illness, age, and fretfulness, peering curiously at me from the depths of his pillow—and his left hand, lying outside the bed-clothes, holding a white embroidered handkerchief, with which he occasionally wiped his clammy features.

“U—u—gh! U—u—gh!” he groaned or rather gasped, as a sudden twinge of pain twisted and corrugated his features almost out of all resemblance to humanity—till they looked more like those of a strangled ape, than the Right Honourable the Earl of ——. The paroxysm presently abated. “You’ve been—down stairs—more than—five minutes—I believe—Dr —?” he

commenced in a petulant tone, pausing for breath between every two words—his features not yet recovered from their contortions. I bowed.

“ I flatter myself—it was *I*—who sent—for you, Dr ———, and—not her Ladyship,” he continued. I bowed again, and was going to explain, when he resumed.

“ Ah ! I see ! Heard—the whole story of Dr ———’s dismissal—ugh—ugh—eh !—May I—beg the favour—of hearing her *Ladyship’s* version—of the affair ?”

“ My Lord, I heard nothing but the simple fact of Dr ———’s having ceased to attend your Lordship”——

“ Ah !—*ceased to attend* ! Good !” he repeated, with a sneer.

“ Will your Lordship permit me to ask if you have much pain just now ?” I enquired, anxious to terminate his splenetic display. I soon discovered that he was in the utmost peril ; for there was every symptom of the gout’s having been driven from its old quarter—the extremities—to the vital organs, the stomach and bowels. One of the most startling symptoms was the sensation he described as resembling that of a platter of *ice* laid upon the pit of his stomach ; and he complained also of increasing nausea. Though not choosing to apprize him of the exact extent of his danger, I strove so to shape my questions and comments that he might infer his being in dangerous circumstances. He either did not, however, or would not comprehend me. I told him that the remedies I should recommend——

“ Ah, by the way,” said he, turning abruptly towards me, “ it mustn’t be the execrable stuff that Dr ——— half poisoned me with ! ’Gad, sir—it had a most diabolical stench—garlic was a pine-apple to it—and here was

I obliged to lie soaked in eau de Cologne, and half stifled with musk. He did it on purpose—he had a spite against me!” I begged to be shown the medicines he complained of, and his valet brought me the half-emptied vial. I found my predecessor had been exhibiting *assafœtida* and musk—and could no longer doubt the coincidence of his view of the case and mine.

“I’m afraid, my Lord,” said I, hesitatingly, “that I shall find myself compelled to continue the use of the medicines which Dr —— prescribed.

“I’ll be —— if you *do*, though—that’s all”—replied the Earl, continuing to mutter indistinctly some insulting words about my “small acquaintance with the *pharmacopœia*.” I took no notice of it.

“Would your Lordship,” said I after a pause, “object to the use of camphor or ammonia?” *

“I object to the use of every medicine but one, and that is a taste of some potted boar’s flesh, which my nephew, I understand, has this morning sent from abroad.”

“My Lord, it is utterly out of the question. Your Lordship, it is my duty to inform you, is in extremely dangerous circumstances”——

“The devil I am!” he exclaimed, with an incredulous smile. “Poh, poh! So Dr —— said. According to him, I ought to have *resigned* about a week ago! Egad—but—but—what symptom of danger is there now?” he enquired abruptly.

* His Lordship, with whom—as possibly, I should have earlier informed the reader—I had some little personal acquaintance before being called in professionally, had a tolerable knowledge of medicine; which will account for my mentioning what remedies I intended to exhibit. In fact, he *insisted* on knowing.

“Why, *one*—in fact, my Lord, the *worst* is—the sensation of numbness at the pit of the stomach, which your Lordship mentioned just now.”

“Poh!—gone—gone—gone! A mere nervous sensation, I apprehend. I am freer from pain just now than I have been all along.” His face changed a little. “Doctor—rather faint with talking—can I have a cordial? Pierre, get me some brandy!” he added in a feeble voice. The valet looked at me—I nodded acquiescence, and he instantly brought the Earl a wine-glassful.

“Another—another—another”—gasped the Earl, his face suddenly bedewed with a cold perspiration. A strange expression flitted for an instant over the features; his eyelids drooped; there was a little twitching about the mouth——

“Pierre! Pierre! Pierre! call the Countess!” said I, hurriedly, loosening the Earl’s shirt-neck, for I saw he was *dying*. Before the valet returned, however, while the muffled tramp of footsteps was heard on the stairs, approaching nearer—nearer—nearer—it was all over! The haughty Earl of —— had gone where rank and riches availed him nothing—to be *alone with God*!

* * * * *

On arriving home that evening, my mind saddened with the scene I had left, I found my wife—Emily—sitting by the drawing-room fire, alone, and in tears. On enquiring the reason of it, she told me that a charwoman who had been that day engaged at our house, had been telling Jane—my wife’s maid—who, of course, communicated it to her mistress, one of the most heart-rending tales of distress that she had ever listened to—

that poverty and disease united could inflict on humanity. My sweet wife's voice, ever eloquent in the cause of benevolence, did not require much exertion to persuade me to resume my walking trim, and go that very evening to the scene of wretchedness she described. The char-woman had gone half-an-hour ago, but left the name and address of the family she spoke of, and, after learning them, I set off. The cold was so fearfully intense, that I was obliged to return and get a "comfortable"* for my neck; and Emily took the opportunity to empty all the loose silver in her purse into my hand, saying, "You know what to do with it, love!" Blessing her benevolent heart, I once more set out on my errand of mercy. With some difficulty I found out the neighbourhood, threading my doubtful way through a labyrinth of obscure back-streets, lanes, and alleys till I came to "Peter's Place," where the objects of my visit resided. I began to be apprehensive for the safety of my person and property, when I discovered the sort of neighbourhood I had got into.

"Do you know where some people of the name of O'Hurdle live?" I enquired of the watchman, who was passing bawling the hour. †

"Yis, I knows *two* of that 'ere name hereabouts—which Hurdle is it, sir?" enquired the gruff guardian of the night.

"I really don't exactly know—the people I want are very, *very* poor."

* "Cette seconde cravate d'hiver se nomme, en Angleterre, *un comfortable*."—*French Translator*.

† "Criant, ou plutôt hurlant : *Minuit et demi—il fait froid—nuit obscure*," &c.—*Ibid*.

“ Oh! oh! oh! I’m thinking they’re all much of a muchness for the matter of that, about here,” he replied, setting down his lantern, and slapping his hands against his sides to keep himself warm.

“ But the people I want are very *ill*—I’m a Doctor.”

“ Oh, oh! you must be meaning ’em ’oose son was transported yesterday! His name was Tim O’Hurdle, sir—though some called him Jimmy—and I was the man that catch’d him, sir—I did! It was for a robbery in this here”——

“ Ay, ay—I dare say they are the people I want. Where is their house?” I enquired, hastily, somewhat disturbed at the latter portion of his intelligence—a new and forbidding feature of the case.

“ I’ll show’ee the way, sir,” said the watchman, walking before me, and holding his lantern close to the ground to light my path. He led me to the last house of the Place, and through a miserable dilapidated door-way; then up two pair of narrow, dirty, broken stairs, till we found ourselves at the top of the house. He knocked at the door with the end of his stick, and called out, “ Holloa, missus! Hey! Within there! You’re wanted here!” adding suddenly, in a lower tone, touching his hat, “ It’s a bitter night, sir—a trifle, sir, to keep one’s self warm—drink your health, sir.” I gave him a trifle, motioned him away, and took his place at the door.

“ Thank your honour!—mind your watch and pockets, sir, that’s all,” he muttered, and left me. I felt very nervous as the sound of his retreating footsteps died away down stairs. I had half a mind to follow him.

“ Who’s there?” enquired a female voice through the door, opened only an inch or two.

“It’s I—a doctor. Is your name O’Hurdle? Is any one ill here? I’m come to see you. Betsy Jones, a char-woman, told me of you.”

“You’re right, sir,” replied the same voice, sorrowfully. “Walk in, sir;” and the door was opened enough for me to enter.

Now, reader, who, while glancing over these sketches, are perhaps reposing in the lap of luxury, believe me when I tell you, that the scene which I shall attempt to set before you, as I encountered it, I feel to beggar all my powers of description; and that what you may conceive to be exaggerations, are infinitely short of the frightful realities of that evening. Had I not seen and known for myself, I should scarcely have believed that such misery existed.

“Wait a moment, sir, an’ I’ll fetch you a light,” said the woman, in a strong Irish accent; and I stood still outside the door till she returned with a rush-light, stuck in a blue bottle. I had time for no more than one glimpse at the haggard features and filthy ragged appearance of the bearer, with an infant at the breast, before a gust of wind, blowing through an unstopped broken pane in the window, suddenly extinguished the candle, and we were left in a sort of darkness visible, the only object I could see being the faint glow of expiring embers on the hearth. “Would your honour be after standing still a while, or you’ll be thredding on the chilter?” said the woman; and, bending down, she endeavoured to re-light the candle by the embers. The poor creature tried in vain, however; for it seemed there was but an inch or two of candle left, and the heat of the embers melted it away, and the wick fell out.

“ Oh, murther—there ! What *will* we do ?” exclaimed the woman ; “ that’s the last bit of candle we’ve in the house, an’ it’s not a farthing I have to by another !”

“ Come—send and buy another,” said I, giving her a shilling, though I was obliged to *feel* for her hand.

“ Oh, thank your honour !” said she, “ an’ we’ll soon be seeing one another. Here, Sal ! Sal ! Sally !—Here, ye cratur !”

“ Well, and what d’ye want with *me* ?” asked a sullen voice from another part of the room, while there was a rustling of straw.

“ Fait, an’ ye must get up wid ye, and go to buy a candle. Here’s a shilling”——

“ Heigh—and isn’t it a loaf o’ bread ye should rather be after buying, mother ?” growled the same voice.

“ Perhaps the Doctor won’t mind,” stammered the mother ; “ he won’t mind our getting a loaf too.”

“ Oh, no, no ! For God’s sake, go directly, and get what you like !” said I, touched by the woman’s tone and manner.

“ Ho, Sal ! Get up—ye may buy some bread too”——

“ Bread ! bread ! bread !—Where’s the shilling ?” said the same voice, in quick and eager tones ; and the ember-light enabled me barely to distinguish the dim outline of a figure rising from the straw on which it had been stretched, and which nearly overturned me by stumbling against me, on its way towards where the mother stood. It was a grown-up girl, who, after receiving the shilling, promised to bring the candle lighted, lest her own fire should not be sufficient, and withdrew, slamming the door violently after her, and rattling down stairs with a rapidity which showed the interest she felt in her errand.

"I'm sorry it's not a seat we have that's fit for you, sir," said the woman, approaching towards where I was standing; "but if I may make so bold as to take your honour's hand, I'll guide you to the only one we have—barring the floor—a box by the fire, and there ye'll sit perhaps till she comes with a light."

"Any where—any where, my good woman," said I; "but I hope your daughter will return soon, for I have not long to be here;" and, giving her my gloved hand, she led me to a deal box, on which I sat down, and she on the floor beside me. I was beginning to ask her some questions, when the moaning of a little child interrupted me.

"Hush! hush!—ye little divel—hush!—ye'll be waking your poor daddy!—hush!—go to sleep wid ye!" said the woman, in an earnest under tone.

"Och—och—mammy!—mammy! an' isn't it so *could*?—I *can't* sleep, mammy," replied the tremulous voice of a very young child; and, directing my eyes to the quarter from which the sound came, I fancied I saw a poor shivering half-naked creature, cowering under the window.

"Hish!—lie still wid ye, ye unfortunat' little divel—an' ye'll presently get something to eat. We ha'n't none of us tasted a morsel sin' the morning, Doctor!" The child she spoke to ceased its moanings instantly; but I heard the sound of its little teeth chattering, and of its hands rubbing and striking together. Well it might, poor wretch—for I protest the room was nearly as cold as the open air—for, besides the want of fire, the bleak wind blew, in chilling gusts, through the broken panes of the window.

“Why, how many of you are there in this place, my good woman?” said I.

“Och, murther! murther! murther! and isn’t there—barring Sal, that’s gone for the candle, and Bobby, that’s out begging, and Tim, that the ould devils at Newgate have sent away to *Bottomless** yesterday,” she continued, bursting into tears;—“Och, an’ won’t that same be the death o’ me, and the poor father o’ the boy—an it wasn’t sich a sentence he deserved—but, hush! hush!” she continued, lowering her tones, “an’ it’s waking the father o’ him, I’ll be, that doesn’t”——

“I understand your husband is ill,” said I.

“Fait, sir, as ill as the ’smatticks† (asthmatics) can make him—the Lord pity him! But he’s had a blessed hour’s sleep, the poor fellow! though the little brat he has in his arms has been making a noise—a little divel that it is—it’s the youngest barring this one I’m suckling—an’ it’s not a fortnight it is sin’ it first looked on its mother!” she continued, sobbing, and kissing her baby’s hand. “Och, och! that the little cratur had niver been born!”

I heard footsteps slowly approaching the room; and presently a few rays of light flickered through the chinks and fissures of the door, which was in a moment or two pushed open, and Sal made her appearance, shading the lighted candle in her hand, and holding a quartern loaf under her arm. She had brought but a wretched rush-light, which she hastily stuck into the neck of the bottle, and placed it on a shelf over the fireplace; and then—what a scene was visible!

The room was a garret, and the sloping ceiling—if

* Botany Bay.

† *Asmésique*.—*Fr. Tr.*

such it might be called—made it next to impossible to move any where in an upright position. The mockery of a window had not one entire pane of glass in it; but some of the holes were stopped with straw, rags, and brown paper, while one or two were not stopped at all! There was not an article of furniture in the place—no, not a bed, chair, or table of any kind; the last remains of it had been seized for arrears of rent—eighteenpence a-week—by the horrid harpy, their landlady, who lived on the ground-floor! The floor was littered with dirty straw, such as swine might scorn—but which formed the only couch of this devoted family! The rushlight eclipsed the dying glow of the few embers, so that there was not even the *appearance* of a fire! And *this* in a garret facing the north—on one of the bitterest and bleakest nights I ever knew! My heart sank within me at witnessing such frightful misery and destitution, and contrasting it, for an instant, with the aristocratical splendour, the exquisite luxuries, of my last patient! *Lazarus and Dives!*

The woman with whom I had been conversing, was a mere bundle of filthy rags—a squalid, shivering, starved creature, holding to her breast a half-naked infant—her matted hair hanging long and loosely down her back, and over her shoulders; her daughter Sal was in like plight—a sullen, ill-favoured slut of about eighteen, who seemed ashamed of being seen, and hung her head like a guilty one. She had resumed her former station on some straw—her bed!—in the extreme corner of the room, where she was squatting, with a little creature cowering close beside her, both munching ravenously the bread which had been purchased. The miserable father of the

family was seated on the floor, with his back propped against the opposite side of the fireplace to that which I occupied, and held a child clasped loosely in his arms, though he had plainly fallen asleep. Oh, what a wretched object! a foul, shapeless, brown-paper cap on his head, and a ragged fustian jacket on his back, which a beggar might have spurned with loathing!

The sum of what the woman communicated to me was, that her husband, a bricklayer by trade, had been long unable to work on account of his asthma; and that their only means of subsistence were a paltry pittance from the parish, her own scanty earnings as a washer-woman, which had been interrupted by her recent confinement, and charities collected by Sal, and Bobby, who was then out begging. Their oldest son, Tim, a lad of sixteen, had been transported for seven years, the day before, for a robbery, of which his mother vehemently declared him innocent; and this last circumstance had, more than all the rest, completely broken the hearts of both his father and mother, who had absolutely starved themselves and their children, in order to hoard up enough to fee an Old Bailey counsel to plead for their son! The husband had been for some time, I found, an out-patient of one of the infirmaries; “and this poor little *darlint*,” said she, sobbing bitterly, and hugging her infant closer to her, “has got the measles, I’m fear-in’; and little Bobby, too, is catching them.—Och murther, murther! Oh, Christ, pity us, poor sinners that we are! Oh! what will we do?—what will we do?”—and she almost choked herself with stifling her sobs, for fear of waking her husband.

“And what is the matter with the child that your

husband is holding in his arms?" I enquired, pointing to it, as it sat in its father's arms, munching a little crust of bread, and ever and anon patting its father's face, exclaiming, "Da-a-a!—Ab-bab-ba!—Ab-bab-ba!"

"Och! what ails the cratur? Nothing, but that it's half-starved and naked—an' isn't that enough—an' isn't it *kilt* I wish we all were—every mother's son of us!" groaned the miserable woman, sobbing as if her heart would break. At that moment, a lamentable noise was heard on the stairs, as of a lad crying, accompanied by the pattering of naked feet. "Och! murther!" exclaimed the woman, with an agitated air—"What's ailing with Bobby? Is it crying he is?" and, starting to the door, she threw it open time enough to admit a ragged shivering urchin, about ten years old, without shoes or stockings, and having no cap, and rags pinned about him, which he was obliged to hold up with his right hand, while the other covered his left cheek. The little wretch, after a moment's pause, occasioned by seeing a strange gentleman in the room, proceeded to put three or four coppers into his mother's lap, telling her, with painful gestures, that a gentleman whom he had followed a few steps in the street, importuning for charity, had turned round unexpectedly, and struck him a severe blow with a cane, over his face and shoulders.

"Let me look at your face, my poor little fellow," said I, drawing him to me; and, on removing his hand, I saw a long weal all down the left cheek. I wish I could forget the look of tearless agony with which his mother put her arms round his neck, and, drawing him to her breast, exclaimed faintly—"Bobby!—my Bobby!" After a few moments, she released the boy,

pointing to the spot where his sisters sat, still munching their bread. The instant he saw what they were doing, he sprang towards them, and plucked a large fragment from the loaf, fastening on it like a young wolf!

“Why, they’ll finish the loaf before you’ve tasted it, my good woman,” said I.

“Och, the poor things!—Let them—let them!” she replied, wiping away a tear. “I can do without it longer than they—the cratur’s!”

“Well, my poor woman,” said I, “I have not much time to spare, as it is growing late. I came here to see what I could do for you as a doctor. How many of you are ill?”

“Fait, an’ isn’t it ailing we all of us are! Ah, your honour!—A ’firmary, without physic or victuals!”

“Well, we must see what can be done for you. What is the matter with your husband there ” said I, turning towards him. He was still asleep, in spite of the tickling and stroking of his child’s hands, who, at the moment I looked, was trying to push the corner of its crust into its father’s mouth, chuckling and crowing the while, as is the wont of children who find a passive subject for their drolleries.

“Och! och! the little villain!—the thing!” said she, impatiently, seeing the child’s employment; “Isn’t it waking him it’ll be?—st—st!”

“Let me see him nearer,” said I: “I *must* wake him, and ask him a few questions.”

I moved from my seat towards him. His head hung down drowsily. His wife took down the candle from the shelf, and held it a little above her husband’s head,

while I came in front of him, and stooped on one knee to interrogate him.

“Phelim!—love!—honey!—darlint!—Wake wid ye! And isn’t it the doctor that comes to see ye?” said she, nudging him with her knee. He did not stir, however. The child, regardless of us, was still playing with his passive features. A glimpse of the awful truth flashed across my mind.

“Let me have the candle a moment, my good woman,” said I, rather seriously.

The man was dead!

He must have expired nearly an hour before, for his face and hands were quite cold; but the position in which he sat, together with the scantiness of the light, concealed the event. It was fearful to see the ghastly pallor of the features, the fixed pupils, the glassy glare downwards, the fallen jaw!—Was it not a subject for a painter?—the living child in the arms of its dead father, unconsciously sporting with a corpse!

* * * * *

To attempt a *description* of what ensued, would be idle, and even ridiculous. It is hardly possible even to imagine it! In one word, the neighbours who lived on the floor beneath were called in, and did their utmost to console the wretched widow and quiet the children. They laid out the corpse decently; and I left them all the silver I had about me, to enable them to purchase a few of the more pressing necessities. I succeeded afterwards in gaining two of the children admittance into a charity school; and through my wife’s interference, the poor widow received the efficient assistance of an unobtrusive, but most incomparable institution, “*The*

Strangers' Friend Society." I was more than once present when those angels of mercy — those "true Samaritans"—the "Visitors" of the Society, as they are called—were engaged on their noble errand, and wished that their numbers were countless, and their means inexhaustible!

CHAPTER VI.

THE RUINED MERCHANT.

It is a common saying, that sorrows never come alone—that “it never rains, but it pours;” * and it has been verified by experience, even from the days of that prince of the wretched—the man “whose name was Job.” Nowadays, directly a sudden accumulation of ills befalls a man, he utters some rash exclamation, like the one in question, and too often submits to the inflictions of Providence with sullen indifference—like a brute to a blow—or resorts, possibly, to suicide. Your poor, stupid, unobserving man, in such a case, cannot conceive how it comes to pass that all the evils under the sun are showered down upon *his* head—at once ! There is no attempt to account for it on reasonable grounds—no reference to probable, nay, obvious causes—his own misconduct, possibly, or imprudence. In a word, he fancies that the only thing they resemble is Epicurus’ fortuitous concourse of atoms. It is, undoubtedly, true,

* ——— And now behold, O Gertrude, Gertrude—
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions.—SHAKESPEARE.

that people are occasionally assailed by misfortunes so numerous, sudden, and simultaneous, as is really unaccountable. In the majority, however, of what are reputed such cases, a ready solution may be found, by any one of observation. Take a simple illustration:—A passenger suddenly falls down in a crowded thoroughfare; and when down, and unable to rise, the one following stumbles over him—the next over him—and so on—all unable to resist the on-pressing crowd behind; and so the first fallen lies nearly crushed and smothered. Now, is not this frequently the case with a man amid the cares and troubles of life? One solitary disaster—one unexpected calamity—befalls him; the sudden shock stuns him out of his self-possession; he is dispirited, confounded, paralysed—and down he falls, in the very throng of all the pressing cares and troubles of life, one implicating and dragging after it another—till all is uproar and consternation. Then it is, that we hear passionate lamentations and cries of sorrows “never coming alone”—of all this “being against him;” and he either stupidly lies still, till he is crushed and trampled on, or, it may be, succeeds in scrambling to the first temporary resting-place he can espy, where he resigns himself to stupified inaction, staring vacantly at the throng of mishaps following in the wake of that one which bore him down. Whereas, the first thought of one in such a situation should surely be, “Let me be ‘up and doing,’ and I may yet recover myself.” “Directly a man determines to *think*,” says an eminent writer, “he is well-nigh sure of bettering his condition.”

It is to the operation of such causes as these, that is to be traced, in a great majority of cases, the necessity

for medical interference. Within the sphere of my own practice, I have witnessed, in such circumstances, the display of heroism and fortitude ennobling to human nature ; and I have also seen instances of the most contemptible pusillanimity. I have marked a brave spirit succeed in buffeting its way out of its adversities ; and I have seen as brave a one overcome by them, and falling vanquished, even with the sword of resolution gleaming in its grasp ; for there *are* combinations of evil, against which no human energies can make a stand. Of this, I think the ensuing melancholy narrative will afford an illustration. What its effect on the mind of the reader may be, I cannot presume to speculate. *Mine* it has oppressed to recall the painful scenes with which it abounds, and convinced of the peculiar perils incident to rapidly acquired fortune, which too often lifts its possessor into an element for which he is totally unfitted, and from which he falls exhausted, lower far than the sphere he had left !

Mr Dudleigh's career afforded a striking illustration of the splendid but fluctuating fortunes of a great English merchant—of the magnificent results ensured by persevering industry, economy, prudence, and enterprise. Early in life he was cast upon the world, to do as he would, or rather *could*, with himself ; for his guardian proved a swindler, and robbed his deceased friend's child of every penny that was left him. On hearing of the disastrous event, young Dudleigh instantly ran away from school, in his sixteenth year, and entered himself on board a vessel trading to the West Indies, as cabin-boy. As soon as his relatives, few in number, distant in degree, and colder in affection, heard of

this step, they told him, after a little languid expostulation, that as he had made his bed, so he must lie upon it; and never came near him again, till he had become ten times richer than all of them put together.

The first three or four years of young Dudleigh's noviciate at sea, were years of fearful, but not unusual hardship. I have heard him state that he was frequently flogged by the captain and mate, till the blood ran down his back like water; and kicked and cuffed about by the common sailors with infamous impunity. One cause of all this was obvious: his evident superiority over every one on board in learning and acquirements. To such an extent did his tormentors carry their tyranny, that poor Dudleigh's life became intolerable; and one evening, on leaving the vessel after its arrival in port from the West Indies, he ran to a public-house in Wapping, called for pen and ink, and wrote a letter to the chief owner of the vessel, acquainting him of the cruel usage he had suffered, and imploring his interference; adding, that, if that application failed, he was determined to drown himself when they next went to sea. This letter, which was signed "*Henry Dudleigh, cabin-boy,*" astonished and interested the person to whom it was addressed; for it was accurately, and even eloquently worded. Young Dudleigh was sent for, and, after a thorough examination into the nature of his pretensions, engaged as a clerk in the counting-house of the ship-owners, at a small salary. He conducted himself with so much ability and integrity, and displayed such a zealous interest in his employers' concerns, that, in a few years' time he was raised to the head of their large establishment, and received a salary of £500 a-year, as

their senior and confidential clerk. The experience he gained in this situation, enabled him, on the unexpected bankruptcy of his employers, to dispose most successfully of the greater portion of what he had saved in their service. He purchased shares in two vessels, which made fortunate voyages ; and the result determined him henceforth to conduct business on his own account, notwithstanding the offer of a most lucrative situation similar to his last. In a word, he went on conducting his speculations with as much prudence, as he undertook them with energy and enterprise.

The period I am alluding to may be considered as the golden age of the shipping interest ; and it will occasion surprise to no one acquainted with the commercial history of those days, to hear that, in little more than five years' time, Mr Dudleigh could " write himself " worth £20,000. He practised a parsimony of the most excruciating kind. Though every one on 'Change was familiar with his name, and cited him as one of the most " rising young men there," he never associated with any of them but on occasions of strict business. He was content with the humblest fare ; and trudged cheerfully to and from the city to his quiet quarters near Hackney, as if he had been but a common clerk, luxuriating on an income of £50 per annum. Matters went on thus prospering with him till his thirty-second year, when he married the wealthy widow of a ship-builder. The influence which she had in his future fortunes, warrants me in pausing to describe her. She* was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old ; of passable person

* " *Mistress Buxom* (!) flotoit entre trente et quarante ans," &c.—*French Translator.*

as far as figure went, for her face was rather bloated and vulgar; somewhat of a dowdy in dress; insufferably vain, and fond of extravagant display; a termagant; with little or no intellect. In fact, she was in disposition, the perfect antipodes of her husband. Mr Dudleigh was a humble, unobtrusive, kind-hearted man, always intent on business, beyond which he did not pretend to know or care for much. How could such a man, it will be asked, marry such a woman?—Was he the *first* who had been dazzled and blinded by the blaze of a large fortune? Such was his case. Besides, a young widow is somewhat careful of undue exposures, which might fright away promising suitors. So they made a match of it; and he resuscitated the expiring business and connexion of his predecessor, and conducted it with a skill and energy, which, in a short time, opened upon him the flood-gates of fortune. Affluence poured in from all quarters; and he was every where called, by his panting but distanced competitors in the city, the “*fortunate* Mr Dudleigh.”

One memorable day four of his vessels, richly freighted, came, almost together, into port; and, on the same day, he made one of the most fortunate speculations in the funds which had been heard of for years; so that he was able to say to his assembled family, as he drank their healths after dinner, that he would not take *a quarter of a million* for what he was worth! And there, surely, he might have paused, nay, made his final stand, as the possessor of such a princely fortune, acquired with unsullied honour to himself, and, latterly, spent in warrantable splendour and hospitality. But no: as is, and ever will be the case, the more he had the more he would have. Not to mention the incessant baiting of his

ambitious wife, the dazzling capabilities of indefinite increase to his wealth proved irresistible. *What* might not be done by a man of Mr Dudleigh's celebrity, with a *floating* capital of some hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and as much credit as he chose to accept of? The regular course of his shipping business brought him in constantly magnificent returns, and he began to sigh after other collateral sources of money-making; for why should nearly one-half of his vast means lie unproductive? He had not long to look about, after it once became known that he was ready to employ his floating capital in profitable speculations. The brokers, for instance, came about him, and he leagued with them. By and by, the world heard of a monopoly of nutmegs. There was not a score to be had any where in London, but at a most exorbitant price—for the fact was, that Mr Dudleigh had laid his hands on them all, and, by so doing, cleared a very large sum. Presently he would play similar pranks with *otto of roses*; and, as soon as he had quadrupled the cost of that fashionable article, he would let loose his stores on the gaping market; by which he gained as large a profit as he had made with the nutmegs. Commercial people will easily see how he did this. The brokers, who wished to effect the monopoly, would apply to him for the use of his capital, and give him an ample indemnity against whatever loss might be the fate of the speculation; and, on its proving successful, rewarded him with a very large proportion of the profits. This is the scheme by which many splendid fortunes have been raised, with a rapidity which has astonished their gainers as much as any one else! Then, again, he negotiated bills on a large scale, and at tremendous dis-

counts; and, in a word, by these and similar means, amassed, in a few years, the enormous sum of half a million of money!

It is easy to guess at the concomitants of such a fortune as this. At the instigation of his wife—for he himself retained all his old unobtrusive and personally economical habits—he supported two splendid establishments—the one at the “West End” of the town, and the other near Richmond. His wife—for Mr Dudleigh himself seemed more like the *hired steward* of his fortune than its possessor—was soon surrounded by swarms of those titled blood-suckers, that batten on bloated opulence, which has been floated into the sea of fashion. Mrs Dudleigh’s dinners, suppers, routs, *soirées*, *fêtes-champêtres*, flashed astonishment on the town, through the columns of the obsequious prints. Miss Dudleigh, an elegant and really amiable girl, about seventeen, was beginning to get talked of as a fashionable beauty, and, report said, had refused her coronets by dozens!—while “young Harry Dudleigh” far out-topped the astonished Oxonians, by spending half as much again as his noble allowance. Poor Mr Dudleigh frequently looked on all this with fear and astonishment, and, when in the city, would shrug his shoulders, and speak of the “*dreadful* doings at the West!” I say, when in the city—for as soon as he travelled westwards, when he entered the sphere of his WIFE’S influence, his energies were benumbed and paralysed. He had too long quietly succumbed to her authority, to call it in question now, and therefore he submitted to the splendid appearance he was compelled to support. He often said, however, that “he could not understand what Mrs Dudleigh *was at* ;” but

beyond such a hint he never presumed. He was seldom or never to be seen amid the throng and crush of company that crowded his house evening after evening. The first arrival of his wife's guests, was his usual signal for seizing his hat and stick, dropping quietly from home, and betaking himself either to some sedate city friend, or to his counting-house, where he now took a kind of morbid pleasure in ascertaining that his gains were safe, and planning greater, to make up, if possible, he would say, "for Mrs Dudleigh's awful extravagance." He did this so constantly, that Mrs Dudleigh began at last to *expect* and calculate on his absence, as a matter of course, whenever she gave a party; and her good-natured, accommodating husband too easily acquiesced, on the ground, as his wife took care to give out, of his *health's* not bearing late hours and company. Though an economical, and even parsimonious man in his habits, Mr Dudleigh had as warm and kind a heart as ever glowed in the breast of man. I have heard many accounts of his systematic benevolence, which he chiefly carried into effect at the periods of temporary *relegation* to the city, above spoken of. Every Saturday evening, for instance, he had a sort of levee, numerously attended by merchants' clerks and commencing tradesmen, all of whom he assisted most liberally with both "cash and counsel," as he good-humouredly called it. Many a one of them owes his establishment in life to Mr Dudleigh, who never lost sight of any deserving object he had once served.

A far different creature Mrs Dudleigh! The longer she lived, the more she had her way—the more frivolous and heartless did she become—the more despotic was

the sway she exercised over her husband. Whenever he presumed to "lecture her," as she called it, she would stop his mouth, with referring to the fortune she had brought him, and ask him triumphantly, "what he could have done without her cash and connexions?" Such being the fact, it was past all controversy that she ought to be allowed "to have her *fling*, now they could so easily afford it!" The sums she spent on her own and her daughter's dresses were absolutely incredible, and almost petrified her poor husband when the bills were brought to him. Both in the articles of dress and party-giving, Mrs Dudleigh was actuated by a spirit of frantic rivalry with her competitors; and what she wanted in elegance and refinement, she sought to compensate for in extravagance and ostentation. It was to no purpose that her trembling husband, with tears in his eyes, suggested to her recollection the old saying, "that fools make feasts, and wise men eat them;" and that, if she gave magnificent dinners and suppers, of course great people would come and eat them for her; but would they thank her? Her constant answer was, that they "ought to support their station in society"—that "the world would not believe them rich, unless they showed it that they were," &c. &c. Then, again, she had a strong plea for her enormous expenditure in the "bringing out of Miss Dudleigh," in the arrayment of whom, panting milliners "toiled in vain." In order to bring about this latter object, she induced, but with great difficulty, Mr Dudleigh to give his bankers orders to accredit her separate cheques; and so prudently did she avail herself of this privilege for months, that she completely threw Mr Dudleigh off his guard, and he allowed a very large

balance to lie in his bankers' hands, subject to the unrestricted drafts of his wife. Did the reader never happen to see in society that horrid harpy, an old dowager, whose niggard jointure drives her to cards? Evening after evening did several of these old creatures squat, toad-like, round Mrs Dudleigh's card-table, and succeeded at last in inspiring her with such a frenzy for "PLAY," as the most ample fortune must melt away under, more rapidly than snow beneath sunbeams. The infatuated woman became notoriously the first to seek, and last to leave, the fatal card-table; and the reputed readiness with which she "bled," at last brought her the honour of an old Countess, who condescended to win from her, at two sittings, very nearly £5000. It is not now difficult to account for the anxiety Mrs Dudleigh manifested to banish her husband from her parties. She had many ways of satisfactorily accounting for her frequent drafts on his bankers. Miss Dudleigh had made a conquest of a young peer, who, as soon as he had accurately ascertained the reality of her vast expectations, fell deeply in love with her! The young lady herself had too much good sense to give him spontaneous credit for disinterested affection; but she was so dunned on the subject by her foolish mother—so petted and flattered by the noble, but impoverished family, that sought her connexion—and the young nobleman, himself a handsome man, so ardent and persevering in his courtship—that at last her heart yielded, and she passed in society as the "envied object of his affections!" The notion of intermingling their blood with NOBILITY, so dazzled the vain imagination of Mrs Dudleigh, that it gave her eloquence enough to succeed, at last, in stirring the phleg-

matic temperament of her husband. "Have a *nobleman* for MY SON-IN-LAW!" thought the merchant, morning, noon, and night—at the East and at the West End—in town and country! What would the city people say to that? He had a spice of ambition in his composition, beyond what could be contented with the achieval of mere city eminence. He was tiring of it—he had long been a kind of *king* on 'Change, and, as it were, carried the stocks in his pockets. He had long thought that it was "possible to choke a dog with pudding," and he was growing heartily wearied of the turtle* and venison eastward of Temple Bar, which he was compelled to eat at the public dinners of the great companies, and elsewhere, when his own tastes would have led him, in every case, to pitch upon "port, beef-steaks, and the papers," as fare fit for a king! The dazzling topic, therefore, on which his wife held forth with unwearied eloquence, was beginning to produce conviction in his mind; and though he himself eschewed his wife's kind of life, and refused to share in it, he did not lend a very unwilling ear to her representations of the necessity for an even increased rate of expenditure, to enable Miss Dudleigh to eclipse her gay competitors, and appear a worthy prize in the eyes of her noble suitor. Aware of the magnitude of the proposed object, he could not but assent to Mrs Dudleigh's opinion, that extraordinary means must be made use of; and was at last persuaded into placing nearly £20,000 in his new banker's hands, subject, as before, to Mrs Dudleigh's drafts, which she promised him should be as seldom and as moderate as she

* "Dons tous les repas solennels de la cité de Londres, une soupe à la tortue est de rigueur!"—*French Translator*.

could possibly contrive to meet necessary expenses with. His many and heavy expenses, together with the great sacrifice in prospect, when the time of his daughter's marriage should arrive, supplied him with new incentives to enter into commercial speculations. He tried several new schemes, threw all the capital he could command into new and even more productive quarters, and calculated on making vast accessions of fortune at the end of the year.

About a fortnight after Mr Dudleigh had informed Mrs Dudleigh of the new lodgment he had made at his bankers, she gave a very large evening party at her house in —— Square. She had been very successful in her guests on the occasion, having engaged the attendance of my Lords *This*, and my Ladies *That*, innumerable. Even the high and haughty Duke of —— had deigned to look in for a few moments, on his way to a party at Carlton House, for the purpose of sneering at the “splendid cit,” and extracting topics of laughter for his royal host. The whole of —— Square, and one or two of the adjoining streets, were absolutely choked with carriages—the carriages of HER guests! When you entered her magnificent apartments, and had made your way through the soft crush and flutter of aristocracy, you might see the lady of the house throbbing and panting with excitement—a perfect blaze of jewellery—flanked by her very kind friends, old Lady ——, and the well-known Miss ——, engaged, as usual, at unlimited loo. The good-humour with which Mrs Dudleigh lost, was declared to be “quite charming”—“deserving of better fortune;” and, inflamed by the cayenned compliments they forced upon her, she was just utter-

ing some sneering and insolent allusion to "that odious *city*," while old Lady ——'s withered talons were extended to clutch her winnings, when there was perceived a sudden stir about the chief door—then a general hush—and, in a moment or two, a gentleman, in dusty and disordered dress, with his hat on, rushed through the astonished crowd, and made his way towards the card-table at which Mrs Dudleigh was seated, and stood confronting her, extending towards her his right hand, in which was a thin slip of paper. It was Mr Dudleigh! "There—there, madam!" he gasped in a hoarse voice—"there, woman! what have you done?—Ruined—ruined me, madam—you've *ruined* me! My credit is destroyed for ever! my name is tainted. Here's the first dishonoured bill that ever bore Henry Dudleigh's name upon it!—Yes, madam, it is *you* who have done it," he continued, with vehement tone and gesture, utterly regardless of the breathless throng around him, and continuing to extend towards her the protested bill of exchange.

"My dear!—my dear—my—my—my dear Mr, Dudleigh," stammered his wife, without rising from her chair, "what is the matter, love?"

"*Matter*, madam?—why, by ——!—that you've ruined me—that's all! Where's the £20,000 I placed in Messrs ——'s hands a few days ago?—Where—WHERE is it, Mrs Dudleigh?" he continued, almost shouting, and advancing nearer to her, with his fist clenched.

"Henry! dear Henry!—mercy, mercy!"—murmured his wife, faintly.

"Henry, indeed! *Mercy*?—Silence, madam! How dare you deny me an answer? How *dare* you swindle

me out of my fortune in this way?" he continued, fiercely, wiping the perspiration from his forehead: "Here's my bill for £4000, made payable at Messrs —, my new bankers; and, when it was presented this morning, madam, by —! the reply was, 'NO EFFECTS!' and my bill has been dishonoured! Wretch! *what* have you done with my money? Where is it all gone?—I'm the town's talk about this — bill! There'll be a run upon me!—I know there will—ay—THIS is the way my hard-earned wealth is squandered, you vile, you unprincipled spendthrift!" he continued, turning round and pointing to the astounded guests, none of whom had uttered a syllable. The music had ceased—the dancers left their places—the card-tables were deserted—in a word, all was blank consternation. The fact was, that old Lady —, who was that moment seated, trembling like an aspen leaf, at Mrs Dudleigh's right hand side, had won from her, during the last month, a series of sums amounting to little short of £9000, which Mrs Dudleigh had paid the day before, by a cheque on her banker; and, that very morning, she had drawn out £4000 odd, to pay her coachmaker's, confectioner's, and milliner's bills, and supply herself with cash for the evening's spoliation. The remaining £7000 had been drawn out during the preceding fortnight, to pay her various clamorous creditors, and keep her in readiness for the gaming table. Mr Dudleigh, on hearing of the dishonour of his bill—the news of which was brought him by a clerk, for he was staying at a friend's house in the country—came up instantly to town, paid the bill, and then hurried, half beside himself, to his house in — Square. It is not at all wonderful, that, though Mr Dudleigh's name

was well known as an eminent and responsible mercantile man, his bankers, with whom he had but recently opened an account, should decline paying his bill, after so large a sum as £20,000 had been drawn out of their hands by Mrs Dudleigh. It looked suspicious enough, truly!

“Mrs Dudleigh! where—WHERE is my £20,000?” he shouted, almost at the top of his voice; but Mrs Dudleigh heard him not, for she had fallen fainting into the arms of Lady——. Numbers rushed forward to her assistance. The confusion and agitation that ensued it would be impossible to describe; and, in the midst of it, Mr Dudleigh strode, at a furious pace, out of the room, and left the house. For the next three or four days he behaved like a madman. His apprehensions magnified the temporary and very trifling injury his credit had sustained, till he fancied himself on the eve of becoming bankrupt. And, indeed, where is the merchant of any eminence, whom such a circumstance as the dishonour of a bill for £4000 (however afterwards accounted for) would not exasperate? For several days, Mr Dudleigh would not go near —— Square, and did not once enquire after Mrs Dudleigh. My professional services were put into requisition on her behalf. Rage, shame, and agony, at the thought of the disgraceful exposure she had met with, in the eyes of all her assembled guests—of those respecting whose opinions she was most exquisitely sensitive—had nearly driven her distracted. She continued so ill for about a week, and exhibited such frequent glimpses of delirium, that I was compelled to resort to very active treatment to avert a brain fever. More than once, I heard her utter the words, or some-

thing like them—"be *revenged* on him yet!" but whether or not she was at the time sensible of the import of what she said, I did not know.

The incident above recorded—which I had from the lips of Mr Dudleigh himself, as well as from others—made a good deal of noise in what are called "the fashionable circles," and was obscurely hinted at in one of the daily papers. I was much amused at hearing, in the various circles I visited, the conflicting and exaggerated accounts of it. One old lady told me she "had it on the best authority, that Mr Dudleigh actually *struck* his wife, and wrenched her purse out of her hand!" I recommended Mrs Dudleigh to withdraw for a few weeks to a watering-place, and she followed my advice; taking with her Miss Dudleigh, whose health and spirits had suffered materially through the event which has been mentioned. Poor girl! she was of a very different mould from her mother, and suffered acutely, though silently, at witnessing the utter contempt in which her mother was held by the very people she made such prodigious efforts to court and conciliate. Can any situation be conceived more painful? Her few and gentle remonstrances, however, met invariably with a harsh and cruel reception; and, at last, she was compelled to hold her peace, and bewail, in mortified silence, her mother's obtuseness.

They continued at ——— about a month; and, on their return to town, found the affair quite "blown over;" and soon afterwards, through the mediation of mutual friends, the angry couple were reconciled to each other. For twelve long months, Mrs Dudleigh led a comparatively quiet and secluded life, abstaining—with

but a poor grace, it is true—from company and cards—from the latter compulsorily; for no one chose to sit down at play with her, who had witnessed or heard of the event which had taken place last season. In short, every thing seemed going on well with our merchant and his family. It was fixed that his daughter was to become Lady —— as soon as young Lord —— should have returned from the Continent; and a dazzling dowry was spoke of as hers on the day of her marriage. Pleased with his wife's good behaviour, Mr Dudleigh's confidence and good-nature revived, and he held the reins with a rapidly slackening grasp. In proportion as he allowed her funds, her scared "friends" flocked again around her; and, by and by, she was seen flouncing about in fashion as heretofore, with small "let or hindrance" from her husband. The world—the sagacious world—called Mr Dudleigh a happy man; and the city swelled at the mention of his name and doings. The mercantile world laid its highest honours at his feet. The Mayoralty—a Bank, an East Indian Directorship—a seat for the city in Parliament—all glittered within his grasp—but he would not stretch forth his hand. He was content, he would say, to be "plain Henry Dudleigh, whose word was as good as his bond"—a leading man on 'Change—and, above all, "who could look every one full in the face with whom he had ever had to do." He was, indeed, a worthy man—a rich and racy specimen of one of those glories of our nation—a true English merchant. The proudest moments of his life were those, when an accompanying friend could estimate his consequence, by witnessing the mandarin movements that every where met him—the obsequious obeisances

of even his closest rivals—as he hurried to and fro about the central regions of 'Change, his hands stuck into the worn pockets of his plain snuff-coloured coat. The merest glance at Mr Dudleigh—his hurried, fidgety, anxious gestures—the keen, cautious expression of his glittering grey eyes—his mouth, screwed up like a shut purse—all, all told of the “man of a million.” There was, in a manner, a “plum” in every tread of his foot, in every twinkle of his eye. He could never be said to breathe freely—really to *live*—but in his congenial atmosphere—his native element—the city!

Once every year, he gave a capital dinner, at a tavern, to all his agents, clerks, and people in any way connected with him in business; and none but himself knew the quiet ecstasy with which he took his seat at the head of them all, joined in their timid jokes, echoed their modest laughter, made speeches, and was be-speechified in turn! How he sat while great things were saying of him, on the occasion of his health's being drunk! On one of these occasions, his health had been proposed by his sleek head-clerk, in a most neat and appropriate speech, and drunk with uproarious enthusiasm; and good Mr Dudleigh was on his legs, energetically making his annual avowal, that “that was the proudest moment of his life,” when one of the waiters came and interrupted him, by saying that a gentleman was without, waiting to speak to him on most important business. Mr Dudleigh hurriedly whispered that he would attend to the stranger in a few minutes, and the waiter withdrew; but returned in a second or two, and put a card into his hand. Mr Dudleigh was electrified at the name it bore—that of the great loan-contractor—the city Croesus, whose wealth

was reported to be incalculable! He hastily called on some one to supply his place; and had hardly passed the door, before he was hastily shaken by the hands by —, who told him at once that he had called to propose to Mr Dudleigh to take part with him in negotiating a very large loan on account of the — Government! After a flurried pause, Mr Dudleigh, scarcely knowing what he was saying, assented. In a day or two, the transaction was duly blazoned in the leading papers of the day; and every one in the city spoke of him as one likely to double, or even treble, his already ample fortune. Again he was praised—again censured—again envied! It was considered advisable that he should repair to the Continent, during the course of the negotiation, in order that he might personally superintend some important collateral transactions: and when there, he was most unexpectedly detained nearly two months. Alas! that he ever left England! During his absence, his infatuated wife betook herself—“like the dog to his vomit, like the sow to her wallowing in the mire”—to her former ruinous courses of extravagance and dissipation, but on a fearfully larger scale. Her house was more like an hotel than a private dwelling; and blazed away, night after night, with light and company, till the whole neighbourhood complained of the incessant uproar occasioned by the mere arrival and departure of her guests. To her other dreadful besetments, Mrs Dudleigh now added the odious and vulgar vice of—intoxication! She complained of the deficiency of her animal spirits; and said she took liquor as a *medicine*! She required stimulus and excitement, she said, to sustain her mind under the perpetual run of ill luck she had at cards! It was in

vain that her poor daughter remonstrated, and almost cried herself into fits, on seeing her mother return home, frequently in the dull stupor of absolute intoxication! "Mother, mother, my heart is breaking!" said she, one evening.

"So—so is mine," hiccupped her parent; "so get me the decanter!"

Young Harry Dudleigh trode emulously in the footsteps of his mother; and ran riot to an extent that was before unknown to Oxford! The sons of very few of the highest nobility had handsomer allowances than he; yet was he constantly over head and ears in debt. He was a backer of the ring ruffians; a great man at cock and dog fights; a racer; in short, a blackguard of the first water. During the recess, he had come up to town and taken up his quarters, not at his father's house, but at one of the distant hotels; where he might pursue his profligate courses without fear of interruption. He had repeatedly bullied his mother out of large sums of money to supply his infamous extravagances; and, at length, became so insolent and exorbitant in his demands, that they quarrelled. One evening, about nine o'clock, Mrs and Miss Dudleigh happened to be sitting in the drawing-room, alone—and the latter was pale with the agitation consequent on some recent quarrel with her mother; for the poor girl had been passionately reproaching her mother for her increasing attachment to liquor, under the influence of which she evidently was at that moment. Suddenly a voice was heard in the hall, and on the stairs singing, or rather bawling, snatches of some comic song or other; the drawing-room door was presently pushed open, and young Dudleigh, more than half

intoxicated, made his appearance in a slovenly evening dress.

"Madame ma mère!" said he, staggering towards the sofa, where his mother and sister were sitting—"I—I *must* be supplied—I must, mother!" he hiccupped, stretching towards her his right hand, and tapping the palm of it significantly with his left fingers.

"Poh—nonsense!—off to—to bed, young scape-grace!" replied his mother, drowsily, for the stupor of wine lay heavily on her.

"'Tis useless, madam—quite, I assure you!—Money—money—money I must and will have!" said her son, striving to steady himself against a chair.

"Why, Harry, dear!—where's the fifty pounds I gave you a cheque for only a day or two ago?"

"Gone! gone the way of all money, madam—as you know pretty well! I—I *must* have £300, by to-morrow"—

"*Three hundred pounds, Henry!*" exclaimed his mother, angrily.

"Yes, ma'am! Sir Charles won't be put off any longer, he says. Has my—my—word—'good as my bond'—as the old governor says! Mother," he continued, in a louder tone, flinging his hat violently on the floor, "I must and *WILL* have money!"

"Henry, it's disgraceful—infamous—most infamous!" exclaimed Miss Dudleigh, with a shocked air; and raising her handkerchief to her eyes, she rose from the sofa, and walked hurriedly to the opposite end of the room, and sat down in tears. Poor girl!—what a mother! what a brother! The young man took the place she had occupied by her mother's side, and, in a

wheeling, coaxing way, threw his arm around Mrs Dudleigh, hiccapping—"Mother—give me a cheque!—do, please!—'tis the last time I'll ask you—for a twelve-month to come!—and I owe £500 that *must* be paid in a day or two!"

"How can I, Harry? Dear Harry, don't be unreasonable!—recollect I'm a kind mother to you," kissing him, "and don't distress me, for I owe three or four times as much myself, and cannot pay it."

"Eh!—eh!—cannot pay it!—stuff, ma'am! Why, is the bank run dry?" he continued, with an apprehensive stare.

"Yes, love—long ago!" replied his mother, with a sigh.

"Whoo—whoo!" he exclaimed; and, rising, he walked, or rather staggered, a few steps to and fro, as if attempting to collect his faculties—and think!

"Ah, ha, ha!—eureka, ma'am!" he exclaimed suddenly after a pause, snapping his fingers—"I've got it—I have!—the *PLATE*, mother—the plate—Hem! raising the wind—you understand me!"

"Oh, shocking, shocking!" sobbed Miss Dudleigh, hurrying towards them, wringing her hands bitterly; "O mother! O Henry, Henry! would you ruin my poor father, and break his heart?"

"Ah, the plate, mother!—the plate!" he continued, addressing his mother; then turning to his sister, "Away, you little puss—puss!—what do *you* understand about business, eh!" and he attempted to kiss her, but she thrust him away with indignation and horror in her gestures.

"Come, mother!—Will it do!—A lucky thought!

The plate!—Mr —— is a rare hand at this kind of thing!—a thousand or two would set you and me to rights in a twinkling!—Come, what say you?”

“Impossible, Harry!”—replied his mother, turning pale—“’tis quite—’tis—’tis—out of the question!”

“Poh! no such thing!—It *must* be done!—why cannot it, ma’am?” enquired the young man, earnestly.

“Why, because—if you *must* know, sirrah!—because it is **ALREADY** pawned!”—replied his mother, in a loud voice, shaking her hand at him with passion. Their attention was attracted at that moment towards the door, which had been standing ajar—for there was the sound of some one suddenly fallen down. After an instant’s pause, they all three walked to the door, and stood gazing horror-struck at the prostrate figure of Mr DUDLEIGH!

He had been standing unperceived in the doorway—having entered the house only a moment or two after his son—during the whole of the disgraceful scene just described, almost petrified with grief, amazement, and horror—till he could bear it no longer, and fell down in an apoplectic fit. He had but that evening returned from abroad, exhausted with physical fatigue, and dispirited in mind; for, while abroad, he had made a most disastrous move in the foreign funds, by which he lost upwards of sixty or seventy thousand pounds; and his negotiation scheme also turned out very unfortunately, and left him minus nearly as much more. He had hurried home, half dead with vexation and anxiety, to make instant arrangements for meeting the most pressing of his pecuniary engagements in England, apprehensive, from the gloomy tenor of his agent’s letters to him while

abroad, that his affairs were falling into confusion. Oh! what a heart-breaking scene had he to encounter—instead of the comforts and welcome of home!

This incident brought me again into contact with this devoted family; for I was summoned by the distracted daughter to her father's bedside, which I found surrounded by his wife and children. The shock of his presence had completely sobered both mother and son, who hung, horror-stricken over him, on each side of the bed, endeavouring in vain to recall him to sensibility. I had scarcely entered the room, before Mrs Dudleigh was carried away swooning in the arms of a servant. Mr Dudleigh was in a fit of apoplexy. He lay in a state of profound stupor, breathing stertorously—more like snorting. I had him raised into nearly an upright position, and immediately bled him largely from the jugular vein. While the blood was flowing, my attention was arrested by the appearance of young Dudleigh; who was kneeling down by the bedside, his hands clasped convulsively together, and his swollen blood-shot eyes fixed on his father. "Father! father! father!" were the only words he uttered, and these fell quivering from his lips unconsciously. Miss Dudleigh, who had stood leaning against the bedpost in stupified silence, and pale as a statue, was at length too faint to continue any longer in an upright posture, and was led out of the room. Here was misery! here was remorse!

I continued with my patient more than an hour, and was gratified at finding that there was every appearance of the attack proving a mild and manageable one. I prescribed suitable remedies, and left—enjoining young Dudleigh not to quit his father for a moment, but to

watch every breath he drew. He hardly seemed to hear me, and gazed in my face vacantly while I addressed him. I shook him gently, and repeated my injunctions; but all he could reply was—"Oh—doctor—we have killed him!"

Before leaving the house, I repaired to the chamber where Mrs Dudleigh lay, just recovering from strong hysterics. I was filled with astonishment, on reflecting upon the whole scene of that evening; and, in particular, on the appearance and remorseful expressions of young Dudleigh. What could have happened?—A day or two afterwards, Miss Dudleigh, with shame and reluctance, communicated to me the chief facts above stated! Her own health and spirits were manifestly suffering from the distressing scenes she had to endure. She told me, with energy, that she could sink into the earth, on reflecting that she was the daughter of such a mother, the sister of such a brother!

[The Diary passes hastily over a fortnight—saying merely that Mr Dudleigh recovered more rapidly than could have been expected—and proceeds—]

Monday, June 18.—While I was sitting beside poor Mr Dudleigh, this afternoon, feeling his pulse, and putting questions to him, which he was able to answer with tolerable distinctness, Miss Dudleigh came and whispered that her mother—who though she had seen her husband frequently, had not spoken to him, or been recognised by him since his illness—was anxious then to come in, as she heard that he was perfectly sensible. I asked him if he had any objections to see her; and he replied with a sigh—"No. Let her come in, and see what she has brought me to!" In a few minutes' time she was in the room. I observed Mr Dudleigh's eyes directed anxiously to the

door before she entered; and the instant he saw her pallid features, and the languid exhausted air with which she advanced towards the bed, he lifted up his shaking hands, and beckoned towards her. His eyes filled with tears, to overflowing, and he attempted to speak—but in vain. She tottered to his side, and fell down on her knees; while he clasped her hands in his, kissed her affectionately, and both of them wept like children; as did young Dudleigh and his sister. That was the hour of full forgiveness and reconciliation! It was indeed a touching scene. There lay the deeply injured father and husband, his grey hair (grown long during his absence on the Continent, and his illness) combed back from his temples; his pale and fallen features exhibiting deep traces of the anguish he had borne. He gave one hand to his son and daughter, while the other continued grasped by Mrs Dudleigh.

“Oh, dear, dear husband!—Can you forgive us, who have so nearly broken your heart?”—she sobbed, kissing his forehead. He strove to reply, but burst into tears, without being able to utter a word. Fearful that the prolonged excitement of such an interview might prove injurious, I gave Mrs Dudleigh a hint to withdraw—and left the room with her. She had scarcely descended the staircase, when she suddenly seized my arm, stared me full in the face, and burst into a fit of loud and wild laughter. I carried her into the first room I could find, and gave her all the assistance in my power. It was long, however, before she recovered. She continually exclaimed—“Oh, what a wretch I’ve been! What a vile wretch I’ve been!—and he so kind and forgiving too!”

As soon as Mr Dudleigh was sufficiently recovered to

leave his bedroom—contrary to my vehemently expressed opinion—he entered at once on the active management of his affairs. It is easy to conceive how business of such an extensive and complicated character as his, must have suffered from so long an intermission of his personal superintendence—especially at such a critical conjuncture. Though his head clerk was an able and faithful man, he was not at all equal to the overwhelming task which devolved upon him ; and, when Mr Dudgeigh, the first day of his coming down 'stairs, sent for him, in order to learn the general aspect of his affairs, he wrung his hands despairingly, to find the lamentable confusion into which they had fallen. The first step to be taken, was the discovery of funds wherewith to meet some heavy demands which had been, for some time, clamorously asserted. What, however, was to be done ? His unfortunate speculations in the foreign funds had made sad havoc of his floating capital ; and farther fluctuations in the English funds, during his illness, had added to his losses. As far as *ready money* went, therefore, he was comparatively penniless. All his resources were so locked up, as to be promptly available only at ruinous sacrifices ; and yet he *must* procure many thousands within a few days—or he trembled to contemplate the consequences.

“ Call in the money I advanced on mortgage of my Lord ——’s property,” said he.

“ We shall lose a third, sir, of what we advanced if we do,” replied the clerk.

“ Can’t help it, sir—*must* have money—and that instantly—call it in, sir.” The clerk, with a sigh, entered his orders accordingly.

“ Ah—let me see. Sell all my shares in ——.”

“Allow me to suggest, sir, that, if you will but wait two months, or even six weeks longer, they will be worth twenty times what you gave for them; whereas, if you part with them at present, it must be at a heavy discount.”

“*Must* have money, sir! must!—write *it* down too,” replied Mr Dudleigh, sternly. In this manner he “ticketed out his property for ruin,” as his clerk said—throughout the interview. His demeanour and spirit were altogether changed; the first was become stern and imperative, the latter rash and inconsiderate, to a degree which none would credit, who had known his former mode of conducting business. All the prudence and energy which had secured him such splendid results, seemed now lost, irrecoverably lost. Whether or not this change was to be accounted for by mental imbecility consequent on his recent apoplectic seizure, or the disgust he felt at toiling in the accumulation of wealth which had been and might yet be so profligately squandered, I know not; but his conduct now consisted of alternations between the extremes of rashness and timorous indecision. He would waver and hesitate about the outlay of hundreds, when every one else—even those most proverbially prudent and sober—would venture their thousands with an almost absolute certainty of tenfold profits; and again, would fling away thousands into the very yawning jaws of villany. He would not tolerate remonstrance or expostulation; and, when any one ventured to hint surprise or dissatisfaction at the conduct he was pursuing, he would say tartly “that he had reasons of his own for what he was doing.” His brother merchants were, for a length of time, puzzled to account for his conduct. At first they gave him credit for playing some deep and desperate

game, and trembled at his hardihood ; but, after waiting a while, and perceiving no

——wondrous issue

Leapt down their gaping throats, to recompense
Long hours of patient hope——

they came to the conclusion, that, as he had been latterly unfortunate, and was growing old, and indisposed to prolong the doubtful cares of money-making, he had determined to draw his affairs into as narrow a compass as possible, with a view to withdrawing altogether from active life, on a handsome independence. Every one commended his prudence in so acting—"in letting well alone." "Easy come, easy go," is an old saw, but signally characteristic of rapidly acquired commercial fortunes : and by these, and similar prudential considerations, did they consider Mr Dudleigh to be actuated. This latter supposition was strengthened by observing the other parts of his conduct. His domestic arrangements indicated a spirit of rigorous retrenchment. His house near Richmond was advertised for sale, and bought, "out and out," by a man who had grown rich in Mr Dudleigh's service. Mrs Dudleigh gave, received, and accepted fewer and fewer invitations : was less seen at public places ; and drove only in one plain chariot. Young Dudleigh's allowance at Oxford was curtailed, and narrowed down to £300 a-year ; and he was forbidden to go abroad, that he might stay at home to prepare for—orders ! There was nothing questionable or alarming in all this, even to the most forward quidnuncs of the city. The world that had blazoned and lauded his, or rather his *family's* extravagance, now commended his judicious

economy. As for himself personally, he had resumed his pristine clock-work punctuality of movements; and the only difference to be perceived in his behaviour, was an air of unceasing thoughtfulness and reserve. This was accounted for, by the rumoured unhappiness he endured in his family—for which Mrs Dudleigh was given ample credit. And then his favourite—his idolized child—Miss Dudleigh—was exhibiting alarming symptoms of ill health. She was notoriously neglected by her young and noble suitor, who continued abroad much longer than the period he had himself fixed on. She was of too delicate and sensitive a character, to hear with indifference the impertinent and cruel speculations which this occasioned in “society.” When I looked at her—her beauty, her amiable and fascinating manners, her high accomplishments—and, in many conversations, perceived the superior feelings of her soul—it was with difficulty I brought myself to believe that she was the offspring of such a miserably inferior woman as her mother.—To return, however, to Mr Dudleigh: He who has once experienced an attack of apoplexy, ought never to be entirely from under medical *surveillance*. I was in the habit of calling upon him once or twice a-week, to ascertain how he was going on. I observed a great change in him. Though never distinguished by high animal spirits, he seemed now under the influence of a permanent and increasing melancholy. When I would put to him some such matter-of-fact question as—“How goes the world with you now, Mr Dudleigh?” he would reply with an air of lassitude—

“Oh, as it *ought*! as it ought.” He ceased to speak of his mercantile transactions with spirit or energy; and

it was only by a visible *effort* that he dragged himself into the city.

When a man is once on the *inclined plane* of life—once fairly “going down hill”—one push will do as much as fifty; and such a one poor Mr Dudleigh was not long in receiving. Rumours were already flying about, that his credit had no more substantial support than *paper* props; in other words, that he was obliged to resort to accommodation bills to meet his engagements. When once such reports are current and accredited, I need hardly say, that it is “all up” with a man in the city. And ought it not to be so? I observed, a little while ago, that Mr Dudleigh, since his illness, conducted his affairs very differently from what he had formerly. He would freight his vessels with unmarketable cargoes, in spite of all the representations of his servants and friends; and, when his advices confirmed the truth of their surmises, he would order the goods to be sold off, frequently at a fifth or eighth of their value. These, and many similar freaks, becoming generally known, soon alienated from him the confidence even of his oldest connexions; credit was given him reluctantly, and then only to a small extent—and sometimes even point blank refused! He bore all this with apparent calmness, observing simply that “times were altered!” Still he had a *corps de reserve* in his favourite investiture—mortgages; a species of security in which he long had locked up some forty or fifty thousand pounds. Anxious to assign a mortgage for £15,000, he had at last succeeded in finding an assignee on advantageous terms, whose solicitor, after carefully inspecting the deed, pronounced it so much waste paper, owing to some great technical flaw, or

informality, which vitiated the whole! Poor Mr Dudleigh hurried with consternation to his attorney; who, after a long show of incredulity, at last acknowledged the existence of the defect! Under his advice, Mr Dudleigh instantly wrote to the party whose property was mortgaged, frankly informing him of the circumstance, and appealing to his "honour and good feeling." He might as well have appealed to the winds! for he received a reply from the mortgager's attorney, stating simply, that "his client was prepared to stand or fall by the deed, and so, of course, must the mortgager!" What was Mr Dudleigh's utter dismay at finding, on further examination, that every mortgage transaction—except one for £1500—which had been entrusted to the management of the same attorney, was equally, or even more invalid than the one above mentioned! Two of the heaviest proved to be worthless, as *second* mortgages of the same property, and all the remainder were invalid, on account of divers defects and informalities. It turned out that Mr Dudleigh had been in the hands of a swindler, who had intentionally committed the draft error, and colluded with his principal, to outwit his unsuspecting client, Mr Dudleigh, in the matter of the double mortgages! Mr Dudleigh instantly commenced actions against the first mortgager, to recover the money he had advanced, in spite of the flaw in the mortgage deed, and against the attorney through whose villany he had suffered so severely. In the former—which, of course, decided the fate of the remaining mortgages similarly situated—he failed; in the latter, he succeeded, as far as the bare gaining of a verdict could be so considered; but the attorney, exasperated at being brought before the court

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and exposed by his client, defended the action in such a manner as did himself no good, at the same time that it nearly ruined the poor plaintiff; for he raked up every circumstance that had come to his knowledge professionally, during the course of several years' confidential connexion with Mr Dudleigh, and which could possibly be tortured into a disreputable shape; and gave his foul brief into the hands of an ambitious young counsel, who, faithful to his instructions, and eager to make the most of so rich an opportunity of vituperative declamation, contrived so to blacken poor Mr Dudleigh's character, by cunning, cruel innuendoes, asserting nothing, but *suggesting* every thing vile and atrocious, that poor Mr Dudleigh, who was in court at the time, began to think himself, in spite of himself, one of the most execrable scoundrels in existence; and hurried home in a paroxysm of rage, agony, and despair, which, but for my being opportunely sent for by Mrs Dudleigh, and bleeding him at once, must, in all probability, have induced a second and fatal apoplectic seizure. His energies, for weeks afterwards, lay in a state of complete stagnation; and I found he was sinking into the condition of an irrecoverable hypochondriac. Every thing, from that time, went wrong with him. He made no provision for the payment of his regular debts; creditors precipitated their claims from all quarters; and he had no resources to fall back upon at a moment's exigency. Some of the more forbearing of his creditors kindly consented to give him time, but the small fry pestered him to distraction; and, at last, one of the latter class, a rude, hard-hearted fellow, cousin to the attorney whom Mr Dudleigh had recently prosecuted, on receiving the requisite "denial,"

instantly went and struck the docket against his unfortunate debtor, and Mr Dudleigh—the celebrated Mr Dudleigh—became a—BANKRUPT!

For some hours after he had received an official notification of the event, he seemed completely stunned. He did not utter a syllable when first informed of it; but his face assumed a ghastly paleness. He walked to and fro about the room—now pausing—then hurrying on—then pausing again, striking his hands on his forehead, and exclaiming, with an abstracted and incredulous air—“A bankrupt! a bankrupt! *Henry Dudleigh* a bankrupt! What are they saying on 'Change?” In subsequently describing to me his feelings at this period, he said he felt as though he had “fallen into his grave for an hour or two, and come out again cold and stupified.”

While he was in this state of mind, his daughter entered the room, wan and trembling with agitation.

“My dear little love, what's wrong? What's wrong, eh? What has dashed you, my sweet flower, eh?” said he, folding her in his arms, and hugging her to his breast. He led her to a seat, and placed her on his knee. He passed his hand over her pale forehead. “What have you been about to-day, Agnes? You've forgotten to dress your hair to-day,” taking her raven tresses in his fingers—“Come, these must be curled! They are all damp, love! What makes you cry?”

“My dear, dear, dear darling father!” sobbed the agonized girl, almost choked with her emotions—clasping her arms convulsively round his neck—“I love you dearer—a thousand times—than I ever loved you in my life!”

"My sweet love!" he exclaimed, bursting into tears. Neither of them spoke for several minutes.

"You are young, Agnes, and may be happy—but as for me, I am an old tree, whose roots are rotten! The blasts have beaten me down, my darling!" She clung closer to him, but spoke not. "Agnes, will you stay with me, now that I'm made a—a beggar? Will you? I can *love* you yet—but that's all!" said he, staring vacantly at her. After a pause, he suddenly released her from his knee, rose from his seat, and walked hurriedly about the room.

"Agnes, love! Why, is it true—is it really TRUE that I'm made a bankrupt of, after all? And is it come to that?" He resumed his seat, covered his face with his hands, and wept like a child. "'Tis for *you*, my darling—for my family—my children, that I grieve! What is to become of you?" Again he paused. "Well! it cannot be helped—it is more my misfortune than my fault! God knows, I've tried to pay my way as I went on—and—and—no, no! it doesn't follow that every man is a *villain* that's a bankrupt!"

"No, no, no, father!" replied his daughter, again flinging her arms round his neck, and kissing him with passionate fondness, "your honour is untouched—it is"—

"Ay, love—but to make the *world* think so—*There's* the rub! What has been said on 'Change to-day, Agnes? That's what hurts me to my soul!"

* * "Come, father, be calm! We shall yet be happy and quiet, after this little breeze has blown over! Oh, yes, yes, father! We will remove to a nice little comfortable house, and live among ourselves!"

"But, Agnes, can you do all this? Can *you* make

up your mind to live in a lower rank—to—to—to be, in a manner, your own servant?"

"Yes, God knows, I can! Father, I'd rather be your servant-girl, than wife of the king!" replied the poor girl with enthusiasm.

"Oh, my daughter!—Come, come, let us go into the next room, and do you play me my old favourite—'*O Nanny wilt thou gang wi' me.*' You'll feel it, Agnes!" He led her into an adjoining room, and set her down at the instrument, and stood by her side.

"We must not part with this piano, my love—must we?" said he, putting her arms round his neck—"we'll try and have it saved from the wreck of our furniture!" She commenced playing the tune he had requested, and went through it.

"Sing, love—sing!" said her father. "I love the words as much as the music! Would you cheat me, you little rogue?" She made him no reply, but went on playing, very irregularly, however.

"Come! you *must* sing, Agnes!"

"I can't!" she murmured. "My heart is breaking! My—my—bro—" and fell fainting into the arms of her father. He rang instantly for assistance. In carrying her from the music-stool to the sofa, an open letter dropped from her bosom. Mr Dudleigh hastily picked it up, and saw that the direction was in the handwriting of his *son*, and bore the "Wapping" post-mark. The stunning contents were as follows:—"My dear, dear, dear Agnes, farewell! it may be *for ever*! I fly from my country! While you are reading this note, I am on my way to America. Do not call me cruel, my sweet sister, for my heart is broken! broken! Yesterday, near

Oxford, I fought with a man who dared to insult me about our family troubles. I am afraid—God forgive me—that I have killed him! Agnes, Agnes, the bloodhounds are after me! Even were they not, I could not bear to look on my poor father, whom I have helped to ruin, under the encouragement of ONE who might have bred me better! I cannot stay in England, for I have lost my station in society; I owe thousands I can never repay; besides—Agnes, Agnes! the bloodhounds are after me! I scarcely know what I am saying! Break all this to my father—my wretched father—as gradually as you can. Do not let him know of it for a *fortnight*, at least. May God be your friend, my dear Agnes! Pray for me! pray for me, my darling Agnes!—yes, for me, your wretched, guilty, heart-broken brother! H. D.”

“Ah! he might have done worse! he *might* have done worse,” exclaimed the stupified father. “Well, I must think about it!” and he calmly folded up the letter to put it into his pocket-book, when his daughter’s eye caught sight of it, for she had recovered from her swoon while he was reading it; and, with a faint shriek, and a frantic effort to snatch it from him, she fell back, and swooned again. Even all this did not rouse Mr Dudleigh. He sat still, gazing on his daughter with a vacant stare, and did not make the slightest effort to assist her recovery. I was summoned in to attend her, for she was so ill that they carried her up to bed.

Poor girl! poor Agnes Dudleigh! already had CONSUMPTION marked her for his own! The reader may possibly recollect, that, in a previous part of this narrative, Miss Dudleigh was represented to be affianced to a young nobleman. I need hardly, I suppose, inform

him that the "affair" was "all off," as soon as ever Lord —— heard of her fallen fortunes. To do him justice, he behaved in the business with perfect politeness and condescension; wrote to her from Italy, carefully returning her all her letters; spoke of her admirable qualities in the handsomest strain; and, in choice and feeling language, regretted the altered state of his affections, and that the "fates had ordained their separation." A few months afterwards, the estranged couple met casually in Hyde Park, and Lord —— passed Miss Dudleigh with a strange stare of irrecognition, that showed the advances he had made in the command of manner! She had been really attached to him, for he was a young man of handsome appearance, and elegant, winning manners. The only things he wanted were a head and a heart. This circumstance, added to the perpetual harassment of domestic sorrows, had completely undermined her delicate constitution; and her brother's conduct prostrated the few remaining energies that were left her.

But Mrs Dudleigh has latterly slipped from our observation. I have little more to say about her. Aware that her own infamous conduct had conduced to her husband's ruin, she had resigned herself to the incessant lashings of remorse, and was wasting away daily. Her excesses had long before sapped her constitution; and she was now little else than a walking skeleton. She sat moping in her bedroom for hours together, taking little or no notice of what happened about her, and manifesting no interest in life. When, however, she heard of her son's fate—the only person on earth she really loved—the intelligence smote her finally down. She never recovered from the stroke. The only words she uttered,

after hearing of his departure for America, were, "Wretched woman! guilty mother! I have done it all!" The serious illness of her poor daughter affected her scarcely at all. She would sit at her bedside, and pay her every attention in her power; but it was rather in the spirit and manner of a hired nurse than a mother.

To return, however, to the "chief mourner"—Mr Dudleigh. The attorney, whom he had sued for his villany in the mortgage transactions, contrived to get appointed solicitor to the commission of bankruptcy sued out against Mr Dudleigh; and he enhanced the bitterness and agony incident to the judicial proceedings he was employed to conduct, by the cruelty and insolence of his demeanour. He would not allow the slightest indulgence to the poor bankrupt, whom he was selling out of house and home; but remorselessly seized on every atom of goods and furniture the law allowed him, and put the heart-broken, helpless family to all the inconvenience his malice could suggest. His conduct was, throughout, mean, tyrannical—even diabolical, in its contemptuous disregard of the best feelings of human nature. Mr Dudleigh's energies were too much exhausted to admit of remonstrance or resistance. The only evidence he gave of smarting under the man's insolence, was, after enduring an outrageous violation of his domestic privacy—a cruel interference with the few conveniencies of his dying daughter, and sick wife—when he suddenly touched the attorney's arm, and, in a low, broken tone of voice, said, "Mr —, I am a poor, heart-broken man, and have no one to avenge me, or you would not dare to do this;" and he turned away in tears! The house and furniture in — Square, with every other item of property that

was available, being disposed of, on winding up the affairs, it proved that the creditors could obtain a dividend of about fifteen shillings in the pound. So convinced were they of the unimpeached, the unimpeachable integrity of the poor bankrupt, that they not only spontaneously released him from all future claims, but entered into a subscription, amounting to £2000, which they put into his hands, for the purpose of enabling him to recommence housekeeping, on a small scale, and obtain some permanent means of livelihood. Under their advice, or rather direction—for he was passive as an infant—he removed to a small house in Chelsea, and commenced business as a coal merchant, or agent for the sale of coals, in a small and poor way, it may be supposed. His new house was very small, but neat, convenient, and situated in a quiet and creditable street. Yes, in a little one-storied house, with about eight square feet of garden frontage, resided the once wealthy and celebrated Mr Dudleigh !

The very first morning after Mrs Dudleigh had been removed to her new quarters, she was found dead in her bed : for the fatigues of changing her residence, added to the remorse and chagrin which had so long preyed upon her mind, had extinguished the last spark of her vital energies. When I saw her, which was not till the evening of the second day after her decease, she was lying in her coffin ; and I shall not soon forget the train of instructive reflections elicited by the spectacle. Poor creature—her features looked indeed haggard and grief-worn ! Mr Dudleigh wept over her remains like a child, and kissed the cold lips and hands with the liveliest transports of regret. At length came the day of the

funeral, as plain and unpretending a one as could be. At the pressing solicitations of Mr Dudleigh, I attended her remains to the grave. It was an affecting thought, that the daughter was left dying in the house from which her mother was carried out to burial. Mr Dudleigh went through the whole of the melancholy ceremony with a calmness—and even cheerfulness—which surprised me. He did not betray any emotion when leaving the ground; except turning to look into the grave, and exclaiming rather faintly—“ Well—here we leave you, poor wife !” On our return home, about three o’clock in the afternoon, he begged to be left alone for a few minutes, with pen, ink, and paper, as he had some important letters to write; and requested me to wait for him in Miss Dudleigh’s room, where he would rejoin me, and accompany me part of my way up to town. I repaired, therefore, to Miss Dudleigh’s chamber. She was sitting up, and dressed in mourning. The marble paleness of her even then beautiful features, was greatly enhanced by contrast with the deep black drapery she wore. She reminded me of the snowdrop she had an hour or two before laid on the pall of her mother’s coffin! Her beauty was fast withering away under the blighting influence of sorrow and disease! She reclined in an easy-chair, her head leaning on her small snowy hand, the taper fingers of which were half concealed beneath her dark, clustering, uncurled tresses—

Like a white rose, glistening ’mid evening gloom.

“ How did he bear it ?” she whispered, with a profound sigh, as soon as I had taken my place beside her. I told her that he had gone through the whole with more calm-

ness and fortitude than could have been expected. "Ah! —'tis unnatural! He's grown strangely altered within these last few days, Doctor! He never seems to *feel* any thing! His troubles have stunned his heart, I'm afraid! Don't you think he *looks* altered?"

"Yes, my love, he is *thinner*, certainly."

"Ah—his hair is white! He is old—he won't be long behind us!"

"I hope, that, now he is freed from the cares and distractions of business"——

"Doctor, is the grave deep enough for THREE?" enquired the poor girl, abruptly, as if she had not heard me speaking. "Our family has been strangely desolated, Doctor—has not it? My mother gone; the daughter on her deathbed; the father wretched, and ruined; the son—flown from his country—perhaps dead, or dying! But it has all been our own fault"——

"*You* have nothing to accuse yourself of, Miss Dudleigh," said I. She shook her head, and burst into tears. This was the melancholy vein of our conversation, when Mr Dudleigh made his appearance, in his black gloves, and crape-covered hat, holding two letters in his hand.

"Come, Doctor," said he, rather briskly, "you've a long walk before you! I'll accompany you part of the way, as I have some letters to put into the post."

"Oh, don't trouble yourself about that, Mr Dudleigh! I'll put them into the post, as I go by."

"No, no—thank you—thank you," he interrupted me, with rather an embarrassed air, I thought; "I've several other little matters to do, and we had better be starting." I rose, and took my leave of Miss Dudleigh. Her father put his arms round her neck, and kissed her

very fondly. "Keep up your spirits, Agnes!—and see and get into bed as soon as possible, for you are quite exhausted." He walked towards the door. "Oh, bless your little heart, my love!" said he, suddenly returning to her, and kissing her more fondly, if possible, than before. "We shall not be apart long, I dare say!"

We set off on our walk towards town; and Mr Dudleigh conversed with great calmness, speaking of his affairs, even in an encouraging tone. At length we separated. "Remember me kindly to Mrs ——," said he, mentioning my wife's name, and shaking me warmly by the hand.

The next morning, as I sat at breakfast, making out my daily list, my wife, who had one of the morning papers in her hand, suddenly let it fall, and, looking palely at me, exclaimed—"Oh, surely—surely, my dear, this can never be—Mr Dudleigh!" I enquired what she meant, and she pointed out the following paragraph:—

"ATTEMPTED SUICIDE.—Yesterday evening, an elderly gentleman, dressed in deep mourning, was observed walking for some time near the water-side, a little above Chelsea-Reach, and presently stepped on board one of the barges, and threw himself from the outer one into the river. Most providentially this latter movement was seen by a boatman who was rowing past, and who succeeded, after some minutes, in seizing hold of the unfortunate person, and lifting him into the boat—but not till the vital spark seemed extinct. He was immediately carried to the public-house by the water-side, where prompt and judicious means were made use of—and with success. He is now lying at the —— public-house; but, as there were no papers or cards about him, his name is

at present unknown. The unfortunate gentleman is of middling stature—rather full made—of advanced years—his hair very grey, and he wears a mourning ring on his left hand.”

I rang the bell, ordered a coach, drew on my boots, and put on my walking dress; and, in a little more than three or four minutes, was hurrying on my way to the house mentioned in the newspaper. A twopenny postman had the knocker in his hand at the moment of my opening the door, and put into my hand a paid letter, which I tore open as I drove along. Good God! it was from—Mr Dudleigh. It afforded unequivocal evidence of the insanity which led him to attempt his life. It was written in a most extravagant and incongruous strain, and acquainted me with the writer’s intention to “bid farewell to his troubles that evening.” It ended with informing me, that I was left a legacy in his will for £5000—and hoping that when his poor daughter died, “I would see her magnificently buried.” By the time I had arrived at the house where he lay, I was almost fainting with agitation: and I was compelled to wait some minutes below before I could sufficiently recover my self-possession. On entering the bedroom where he lay, I found him undressed, and fast asleep. There was no appearance whatever of discomposure in the features. His hands were clasped closely together—and in that position he had continued for several hours. The medical man who had been summoned in over night, sat at his bedside, and informed me that his patient was going on as well as could be expected. The treatment he had adopted had been very judicious and successful; and I had no doubt that, when next Mr Dudleigh awoke,

he would feel little, if any, the worse for what he had suffered. All my thoughts were now directed to Miss Dudleigh; for I felt sure that, if the intelligence had found its way to her, it must have destroyed her. I ran every inch of the distance between the two houses, and knocked gently at the door with my knuckles, that I might not disturb Miss Dudleigh. The servant-girl, seeing my discomposed appearance, would have created a disturbance, by shrieking, or making some other noise, had I not placed my fingers on her mouth, and, in a whisper, asked how her mistress was? "Master went home with you, sir, did not he?" she enquired, with an alarmed air.

"Yes—yes:" I replied, hastily.

"Oh, I told Miss so! I told her so!" replied the girl, clasping her hands, and breathing freer.

"Oh, she has been uneasy about his not coming home last night—eh?—Ah—I thought so this morning, and that is what has brought me here in such a hurry," said I, as calmly as I could. After waiting down stairs to recover my breath a little, I repaired to Miss Dudleigh's room. She was awake. The moment I entered, she started up in bed—her eyes straining, and her arms stretched towards me.

"My—my—father!"——she gasped; and, before I could open my lips, or even reach her side, she had fallen back in bed, and, as I thought, expired. She had swooned: and, during the whole course of my experience, I never saw a swoon so long and closely resemble death. For more than an hour, the nurse, servant girl, and I, hung over her in agonizing and breathless suspense, striving to detect her breath—which made no

impression whatever on the glass I, from time to time, held over her mouth. Her pulse fluttered and fluttered—feebler and feebler—till I could not perceive that it beat at all. “Well!” thought I, at last removing my fingers, “you are gone, sweet Agnes Dudleigh, from a world that has but few as fair and good!”—when a slight undulation of the breast, accompanied by a faint sigh, indicated slowly returning consciousness. Her breath came again, short and faint; but she did not open her eyes for some time after. * * *

“Well, my sweet girl,” said I, presently observing her eyes fixed steadfastly on me; “why all this? What has happened? What is the matter with you?” and I clasped her cold fingers in my hand. By placing my ear so close to her lips that it touched them, I distinguished the sound—“My fa—father!”

“Well! and what of your father? He is just as usual, and sends his love to you.” Her eyes, as it were, dilated on me; her breath came quicker and stronger, and her frame vibrated with emotion. “He is coming home shortly, by—by—*four* o’clock this afternoon,—yes, four o’clock at the latest. Thinking that a change of scene might revive his spirits, I prevailed on him last night to walk on with me home—and—and he slept at my house.” She did not attempt to speak, but her eye continued fixed on me with an unwavering look that searched my very soul! “My wife and Mr Dudleigh will drive down together,” I continued, firmly, though my heart sank within me at the thought of the improbability of such being the case; “and I shall return here by the time they arrive, and meet them. Come, come, Miss Dudleigh—this is weak—absurd!” said I, obser-

ving that what I said seemed to make no impression on her. I ordered some port wine and water to be brought, and forced a few tea-spoonfuls into her mouth. They revived her, and I gave her more. In a word, she rapidly recovered from the state of uttermost exhaustion into which she had fallen; and, before I left, she said solemnly to me, "Doctor——! if—*IF* you have deceived me!—if any thing dreadful has really—really"——

I left, half distracted to think of the impossibility of fulfilling the promise I had made her, as well as of accounting satisfactorily for not doing so. What could I do? I drove rapidly homewards, and requested my wife to hurry down immediately to Miss Dudleigh, and pacify her with saying that her father was riding round with me, for the sake of exercise, and that we should come to her together. I then hurried through my few professional calls, and repaired to Mr Dudleigh. To my unutterable joy and astonishment, I found him up dressed—for his clothes had been drying all night—and sitting quietly by the fire, in company with the medical man. His appearance exhibited no traces whatever of the accident which had befallen him. But, alas! on looking close at him—on examining his features—Oh, that eye! that smile! they told me of departed reason!—I was gazing on an *idiot*! O God! What was to become of Miss Dudleigh? How was I to bring father and daughter face to face? My knees smote together, while I sat beside him! But it *must* be done, or Miss Dudleigh's life would be the forfeit! The only project I could hit upon for disguising the frightful state of the case, was to hint to Miss Dudleigh, if she perceived any thing wild or unusual in his demeanour, that he was a

little flustered with wine! But *what* a circumstance to communicate to the dying girl. And even if it succeeded, what would ensue on the next morning. Would it be *safe* to leave him with her? I was perplexed and confounded between all these painful conjectures and difficulties!

He put on his hat and great-coat, and we got into my chariot together. He was perfectly quiet and gentle, conversed on indifferent subjects, and spoke of having had "a cold bath" last night, which had done him much good! My heart grew heavier and heavier as we neared the home where I was to bring her idiot father to Miss Dudleigh! I felt sick with agitation, as we descended the carriage steps.

But I was for some time happily disappointed. He entered her room with eagerness, ran up to her and kissed her with his usual affectionate energy. She held him in her arms for some time, exclaiming—"Oh, father, father! How glad I am to see you! I thought some accident had happened to you! Why did you not tell me that you were going home with Dr——?" My wife and I trembled, and looked at each other despairingly.

"Why," replied her father, sitting down beside her, "you see, my love, Dr —— recommended me a cold bath."

"A *cold bath* at THIS time of the year!" exclaimed Miss Dudleigh, looking at me with astonishment. I smiled, with ill-assumed nonchalance.

"It is very advantageous at—at—even this season of the year," I stammered, for I observed Miss Dudleigh's eye fixed on me like a ray of lightning.

"Yes; but they ought to have *taken off my clothes*

first," said Mr Dudleigh, with a shuddering motion. His daughter suddenly laid her hand on him, uttered a faint shriek, and fell back in her bed in a swoon. The dreadful scene of the morning was all acted over again. I think I should have rejoiced to see her expire on the spot ; but no ! Providence had allotted her a farther space, that she might drain the cup of sorrow to the dregs !

* * * * *

Tuesday, 18th July 18—.—I am still in attendance on poor unfortunate Miss Dudleigh. The scenes I have to encounter are often anguishing, and even heart-breaking. She lingers on day after day, and week after week, in increasing pain ! By the bedside of the dying girl, sits the figure of an elderly gray-haired man, dressed in neat and simple mourning—now gazing into vacancy with “lack lustre eye”—and then suddenly kissing her hand with childish eagerness, and chattering mere gibberish to her ! It is her idiot father ! Yes, he proves an irrecoverable idiot—but is uniformly quiet and inoffensive. We at first intended to have sent him to a neighbouring private institution for the reception of the insane ; but poor Miss Dudleigh would not hear of it, and threatened to destroy herself, if her father was removed. She insisted on his being allowed to continue with her, and consented that a proper person should be in constant attendance on him. She herself could manage him, she said ! and so it proved. He is a mere child in her hands. If ever he is inclined to be mischievous or obstreperous—which is very seldom—if she do but say, “hush !” or lift up her trembling finger, or fix her eye upon him reprovngly, he is instantly cowed, and runs up to her to “kiss and be friends.” He often

falls down on his knees, when he thinks he has offended her, and cries like a child. She will not trust him out of her sight for more than a few moments together—except when he retires with his guardian, to rest: and, indeed, he shows as little inclination to leave her. The nurse's situation is almost a sort of sinecure; for the anxious officiousness of Mr Dudleigh leaves her little to do. He alone gives his daughter her medicine and food, and does so with exquisite gentleness and tenderness. He has no notion of her real state—that she is dying; and, finding that she could not succeed in her efforts gradually to apprise him of the event, which he always turned off with a smile of incredulity, she gives in to his humour, and tells him—poor girl!—that she is getting better! He has taken it into his head that she is to be married to Lord —, as soon as she recovers, and talks with high glee of the magnificent repairs going on at his former house in — Square! He always accompanies me to the door; and sometimes writes me cheques for £50—which, of course, is a delusion only—as he has no banker, and few funds to put in his hands; and, at other times, slips a shilling or a sixpence into my hand at leaving—thinking, doubtless, that he has given me a guinea.

Friday.—The idea of Miss Dudleigh's rapidly approaching marriage continues still uppermost in her father's head; and he is incessantly pestering her to make preparations for the event. To-day he appealed to me, and complained that she would not order her wedding-dress.

“Father, dear father!” said Miss Dudleigh, faintly, laying her wasted hand on his arm—“only be quiet a

little, and I'll begin to make it!—I'll really set about it to-morrow!" He kissed her fondly, and then eagerly emptied his pockets of all the loose silver that was in them, telling her to take it, and order the materials. I saw that there was something or other peculiar in the expression of Miss Dudleigh's eye, in saying what she did—as if some sudden scheme had suggested itself to her. Indeed, the looks with which she constantly regards him, are such as I can find no adequate terms of description for. They bespeak blended anguish—apprehension—pity—love—in short, an expression that haunts me wherever I go. Oh, what a scene of suffering humanity!—a daughter's deathbed, watched by an idiot father!

Monday.—I now know what was Miss Dudleigh's meaning, in assenting to her father's proposal last Friday. I found, this morning, the poor dear girl engaged on her shroud!—It is of fine muslin, and she is attempting to sew and embroider it. The people about her did all they could to dissuade her: but there was at last no resisting her importunities. Yes!—there she sits, poor thing, propped up by pillows, making frequent but feeble efforts to draw her needle through her gloomy work—her father, the while, holding one end of the muslin, and watching her work with childish eagerness! Sometimes a tear will fall from her eyes while thus engaged. It did this morning. Mr Dudleigh observed it, and, turning to me, said, with an arch smile, "Ah ha!—how is it that young ladies always cry about being married?" Oh, the look Miss Dudleigh gave me, as she suddenly dropped her work, and turned her head aside!

Saturday.—Mr Dudleigh is hard at work making his daughter a cowslip wreath, out of some flowers given him by his keeper.

When I took my leave to-day, he accompanied me, as usual, down stairs, and led the way into the little parlour. He then shut the door, and told me, in a low whisper, that he wished me to bring him an *honest* lawyer to make his will; for that he was going to settle £200,000 upon his daughter!—of course I put him off with promises to look out for what he asked. It is rather remarkable, I think, that he has never once, in my hearing, made any allusion to his deceased wife. As I shook his hand at parting, he stared suddenly at me, and said—"Doctor—Doctor! my daughter is *VERY* slow in getting well—isn't she?"

Monday, July 23.—The suffering angel will soon leave us and all her sorrows! She is dying fast. She is very much altered in appearance, and has not power enough to speak in more than a whisper—and that but seldom. Her father sits gazing at her with a puzzled air, as if he did not know what to make of her unusual silence. He was a good deal vexed when she laid aside her wedding-dress; and tried to tempt her to resume it, by showing her a shilling! While I was sitting beside her, Miss Dudleigh, without opening her eyes exclaimed, scarcely audible, "Oh! be kind to him! be kind to him! He won't be long here! He is very gentle!"

Monday evening.—Happening to be summoned to the neighbourhood, I called a second time during the day on Miss Dudleigh. All was quiet when I entered the room. The nurse was sitting at the window, reading;

and Mr Dudleigh occupied his usual place at the bedside, leaning over his daughter, whose arms were clasped together round his neck.

“Hush! hush!” said Mr Dudleigh, in a low whisper, as I approached—“Don’t make a noise—she’s asleep!”—Yes, she was ASLEEP—and to wake no more! Her snow-cold arms—her features—which, on parting the dishevelled hair that hid them, I perceived to be fallen—told me that she was dead!

She was buried in the same grave as her mother. Her wretched father, contrary to our apprehensions, made no disturbance whatever while she lay dead. They told him that she was no more—but he did not seem to comprehend what was meant. He would take hold of her passive hand, gently shake it, and let it fall again, with a melancholy wandering stare, that was pitiable! He sat at her coffin-side all day long, and laid fresh flowers upon her every morning. Dreading lest some sudden paroxysm might occur, if he was suffered to see the lid screwed down, and her remains removed, we gave him a tolerably strong opiate in some wine, on the morning of the funeral; and, as soon as he was fast asleep, we proceeded with the last sad rites, and committed to the cold and quiet grave another broken heart.

Mr Dudleigh suffered himself to be soon after conveyed to a private asylum, where he had every comfort and attention requisite for his circumstances. He had fallen into profound melancholy, and seldom or never spoke to any one. He would shake me by the hand languidly, when I called to see him, but hung down his head in silence, without answering any of my questions.

His favourite seat was a rustic bench beneath an ample sycamore tree, in the green behind the house. Here he would sit for hours together, gazing fixedly in one direction, towards a rustic church-steeple, and uttering deep sighs. No one interfered with him ; and he took no notice of any one. One afternoon a gentleman of foreign appearance called at the asylum, and in a hurried, faltering voice, asked if he could see Mr Dudleigh. A servant but newly engaged on the establishment, imprudently answered—" Certainly, sir. Yonder he is, sitting under the sycamore. He never notices any one sir." The stranger—young Dudleigh, who had but that morning arrived from America—rushed past the servant, into the garden ; and, flinging down his hat, fell on one knee before his father, clasping his hands over his breast. Finding his father did not seem inclined to notice him, he gently touched him on the knee, and whispered,—“ FATHER !” Mr Dudleigh started at the sound—turned suddenly towards his son—looked him full in the face—fell back in his seat—and instantly expired.

CHAPTER VII.

MOTHER AND SON.

THIS may be considered the most mournful extract from my Diary. It appears to me a touching and terrible disclosure of the misery, disgrace, and ruin consequent on GAMBLING. Not that I imagine it possible, even by the most moving exhibition, to soften the more than nether millstone hardness of a gamester's heart, or enable a *voluntary* victim to break from the meshes in which he has suffered himself to be entangled; but the lamentable cries ascending from this pit of horror, may scare off those who are thoughtlessly *approaching* its brink. The moral of the following events may be gathered up into a word or two:—Oh! be wise—and *be wise in time!*

I took more than ordinary pains to acquaint myself with the transactions which are hereafter specified; and some of the means I adopted are occasionally mentioned, as I go on with the narrative. It may be as well to state, that the events detailed are assigned a date which

barely comes within the present century. I have reason, nevertheless, to know, that at least one of the guilty agents still survives to pollute the earth with his presence ; and if that individual should presume to gainsay any portion of the following narrative, his impotent efforts will meet with the disdain they merit !

Mr Beauchamp came to the full receipt of a fortune of two or three thousand a-year, which, though hereditary, was at his absolute disposal about the period of his return from those continental peregrinations which are judged essential to complete an English gentleman's education. External circumstances seemed to combine in his favour. Happiness and honour in life were insured him, at the cost of very moderate exertions on his own part—and *those* requisite, not to originate, or continue his course—but only to *guide* it. No one was better apprized than himself of the precise position he occupied in life ; yet the apparent immunity from the cares and anxieties of life, which seemed irrevocably secured to him, instead of producing its natural effect on a well-ordered mind, of stimulating it to honourable action, led to widely different, most melancholy, but by no means unusual results—a prostitution of his energies and opportunities to the service of fashionable dissipation. The restraints to which, during a long minority, he had been subjected by his admirable mother, who nursed his fortune as sedulously, but *more* successfully, than she cultivated his mind and morals—served, alas ! little other purpose than to whet his appetite for the pleasurable pursuits to which he considered himself entitled, and from which he had been so long and unnecessarily

debarred. All these forbidden fruits clustered before him in tempting, but unhallowed splendour, the instant that Oxford threw open its portals to receive him. He found there many spirits as ardent and dissatisfied with past restraints as himself. The principal features of his character were flexibility and credulity; and his leading propensity—one that, like the wrath of Achilles, drew after it innumerable sorrows—the love of *play*.

The first false step he made was an unfortunate selection of a tutor; a man of agreeable and compliant manners, but utterly worthless in point of moral character; one who had impoverished himself, when first at college, by gaming, but who, having learned "*wisdom*," was now a subtle and cautious gamester. He was one of a set of notorious *pluckers*, among whom, shameful to relate, were found several young men of rank: and whose business it was to seek out freshmen for their dupes. Eccles—the name I shall give the tutor—was an able mathematician; and that was the only thing that Beauchamp looked to in selecting him. Beauchamp got regularly introduced to the set to which his tutor belonged; but his mother's lively and incessant surveillance put it out of his power to embarrass himself by serious losses. He was long enough, however, apprenticed to guilt, to form the habits and disposition of a *gamester*. The cunning Eccles, when anxiously interrogated by Mrs Beauchamp about her son's general conduct, gave his pupil a flourishing character, both for moral excellence and literary attainments, and acquitted him of any tendency to the vices usually prevalent at college. And all this, when Eccles knew that he had seen, but a few weeks before,

among his pupil's papers, copies of long bills, accepted payable on his reaching twenty-one—to the tune of £1500 ; and, farther, that he, the tutor himself, was the holder of one of these acceptances ; which ensured him £500 for the £300 he had *kindly* furnished for his pupil ! His demure and plausible air quite took with the unsuspecting Mrs Beauchamp ; and she thought it impossible that her son could find a fitter companion to the Continent !

On young Beauchamp's return to England, the first thing he did was to despatch his obsequious tutor into the country, to trumpet his pupil's praises to his mother, and apprise her of his coming. The good old lady was in ecstasies at the glowing colours in which her son's virtues were painted by Eccles—such uniform moderation and prudence, amidst the seductive scenes of the Continent—such shining candour—such noble liberality ! —In the fulness of her heart, Mrs Beauchamp promised the tutor, who was educated for the *Church*, the next presentation to a living which was expected very shortly to fall vacant—as some “ small return for the *invaluable* services he had rendered her son ! ”

It was a memorable day when young Beauchamp arrived at the Hall in ——shire, stood suddenly before his transported mother, in all the pride of person, and of apparent accomplishments. He was indeed a fine young fellow to look at. His well-cast features beamed with an expression of frankness and generosity ; and his manners were exquisitely tempered with cordiality and elegance. He had *brushed the bloom* off continental flowers, in passing, and caught their glow and perfume.

It was several minutes before he could disengage him

self from the embraces of his mother, who laughed and wept by turns, and uttered the most passionate exclamations of joy and affection. "Oh, that your poor old father could see you!" she sobbed, and almost cried herself into hysterics. Young Beauchamp was deeply moved with this display of parental tenderness. He saw and felt that his mother's whole soul was bound up with his own; and with the rapid resolutions of youth, he had, in five minutes, changed the whole course and scope of his life—renounced the pleasures of London, and resolved to come and settle on his estates in the country, live under the proud and fond eye of his mother, and, in a word, tread in the steps of his father. He felt suddenly imbued with the spirit of the good old English country gentleman, and resolved to live the life of one. There was, however, a cause in operation, and powerful operation, to bring about this change of feeling, to which I have not yet adverted. His cousin, Ellen Beauchamp, *happened* to be thought of by her aunt, as a fit person to be staying with her when her son arrived. Yes—the little blue-eyed girl with whom he had romped fifteen years ago, now sat beside him in the bloom of budding womanhood—her peachy cheeks alternately pale and flushed, as she saw her cousin's enquiring eye settled upon her, and scanning her beautiful proportions. Mr Beauchamp took the very first opportunity he could seize of asking his mother, with some trepidation, "whether Ellen was *engaged*."

"I think she is *not*," replied his delighted mother, bursting into tears, and folding him in her arms—"but I wish *somebody* would take the earliest opportunity of doing so."

“ Ah, ha!—Then she’s Mrs Beauchamp, junior!” replied her son, with enthusiasm.

Matters were quickly, quietly, and effectually arranged to bring about that desirable end—as they always are, when all parties understand one another; and young Beauchamp made up his mind to appear in a new character—that of a quiet country gentleman, the friend and patron of an attached tenantry, and a promising aspirant after county honours. What is there in life like the sweet and freshening feelings of the wealthy young squire, stepping into the sphere of his hereditary honours and influence, and becoming at once the revered master of household and tenantry, grown gray in his father’s service—the prop of his family—and the “ rising man” in the county! Young Beauchamp experienced these salutary and reviving feelings in their full force. They diverted the current of his ambition into a new course, and enabled him keenly to appreciate his own capabilities. The difference between the life he had just determined on, and that he had formerly projected, was simply—so to speak—the difference between being a Triton among minnows, and a minnow among Tritons. At home, residing on his own property, surrounded by his own dependents, and by neighbours who were solicitous to secure his good graces, he could *feel* and enjoy his own consequence. Thus, in every point of view, a country life appeared preferable to one in the “ gay and whirlpool crowded town.”

There was, however, one individual at —— Hall, who viewed these altered feelings and projects with no satisfaction—it was Mr Eccles. This mean and selfish individual saw at once, that, in the event of these altera-

tions being carried into effect, his own nefarious services would be instantly dispensed with, and a state of feelings brought into play which would lead his pupil to look with disgust at the scenes to which he had been introduced at college, and on the Continent. He immediately set to work to frustrate the plans of his pupil. He selected the occasion of his being sent for one morning by Mr Beauchamp into his library, to commence operations. He was not discouraged, when his *ci-devant* pupil, whose eyes had really, as Eccles suspected, been opened to the iniquity of his tutor's doings, commenced thanking him, in a cold and formal style, for his past services, and requested presentation of the bill he held against him for £500, which he instantly paid. He then proceeded, without interruption from the mortified Eccles, to state his regret at being unable to reward his services with a living, at present; but that, if ever it were in his power, he might rely on it, &c. &c. Mr Eccles, with astonishment, mentioned the living of which Mrs Beauchamp had promised him the reversion; but received an evasive reply from Mr Beauchamp, who was at length so much irritated at the pertinacity, and even the reproachful tone with which his tutor pressed his claim, that he said sharply, "Mr Eccles, when my mother made you that promise, she never consulted me, in whose sole gift the living is. And besides, sir, what did she know of our tricks at French Hazard and Rouge et Noir? She must have thought your skill at play an odd recommendation for the duties of the Church." High words, mutual recriminations, and threats ensued, and they parted in anger. The tutor resolved to make his "ungrateful" pupil repent of his misconduct; and he lacked neither

the tact nor the opportunities necessary for accomplishing his purpose. The altered demeanour of Mrs Beauchamp, together with the haughty and constrained civility of her son, soon warned Mr Eccles that his departure from the Hall should not be delayed ; and he very shortly withdrew.

Mr Beauchamp began to breathe freely, as it were, when the evil spirit, in his tutor's shape, was no longer at his elbow, poisoning his principles, and prompting him to vice and debauchery. He resolved, forthwith, to *be* all that his tutor had *represented* him to his mother ; and to atone for past indiscretions, by a life of sobriety and virtue. All now went on smoothly and happily at the Hall. The new squire entered actively on the duties devolving upon him, and was engaged daily driving his beautiful cousin over his estate, and showing to his obsequious tenantry their future lady. On what trifling accidents do often the great changes of life depend !—Mr Beauchamp, after a three months' continuance in the country, was sent for by his solicitor to town, in order to complete the final arrangements of his estate ; and which, he supposed, would occupy him but a few days. That London visit led to his ruin ! It may be recollected that the execrable Eccles owed his pupil a grudge for the disappointment he had occasioned him, and the time and manner of his dismissal. What does the reader imagine was the diabolical device he adopted, to bring about the utter ruin of his unsuspecting pupil ? Apprized of Mr Beauchamp's visit to London (Mr Eccles had removed to lodgings but a little distance from the Hall, and was, of course, acquainted with the leading movements of the family), he wrote the following letter to

a Baronet in London, with whom he had been very intimate as a "Plucker" at Oxford—and who having ruined himself by his devotion to play—equally in respect of fortune and character—was now become little else than a downright systematic sharper:—

"DEAR SIR EDWARD,

"Young Beauchamp, one of our quondam *pigeons* at Oxford, who has just come of age, will be in London next Friday or Saturday, and put up at his old hotel, the ——. *He will bear plucking.* Verb. suf. The bird is somewhat shy—but you are a good shot. Don't frighten him. He is giving up *life*, and going to turn *saint*! The fellow has used me cursedly ill, he has cut me quite, and refused me old Dr ———'s living. I'll make him repent it! I will, by ———!

"Yours ever, most faithfully,

"PETER ECCLES.

"TO SIR EDWARD STREIGHTON.

"P.S.—If Beauchamp plucks well, you won't press me for the trifle I owe—will you? Burn this note."

This infernal letter, which, by a singular concurrence of events, got into the hands where *I saw it*, laid the train for such a series of plotting and manœuvring, as, in the end, ruined poor Beauchamp, and gave Eccles his coveted revenge.

When Beauchamp quitted the Hall, his mother and Ellen had the most solemn assurances that his stay in town would not be protracted beyond the week. Nothing but this could quiet the good old lady's apprehensions, who expressed an unaccountable conviction that some calamity or other was about to assail their house. She had had a dreadful dream, she said! but

when importuned to tell it, answered, that if Henry came safe home, then she would tell them her dream. In short, his departure was a scene of tears and gloom, which left an impression of sadness on his own mind, that lasted all the way up to town. On his arrival, he betook himself to his old place, the —— Hotel, near Piccadilly; and, in order to expedite his business as much as possible, appointed the evening of the very day of his arrival for a meeting with his solicitor.

The morning papers duly apprized the world of the important fact, that “Henry Beauchamp, Esquire, had arrived at ——’s from his seat in ——shire;” and scarcely ten minutes after he had read the officious annunciation at breakfast, his valet brought in the card of Sir Edward Streighton.

“Sir Edward Streighton!” exclaimed Beauchamp, with astonishment, laying down the card; adding, after a pause, with a cold and doubtful air—“Show in Sir Edward, of course.”

In a few moments, the Baronet was ushered into the room—made up to his old “friend” with great cordiality, and expressed a thousand winning civilities. He was attired in a style of fashionable negligence; and his pale, emaciated features ensured him, at least, the *show* of a welcome, with which he would not otherwise have been greeted; for Beauchamp, though totally ignorant of the present pursuits and degraded character of his visiter, had seen enough of him in the heyday of dissipation, to avoid a renewal of their intimacy. Beauchamp was touched with the air of languor and exhaustion assumed by Sir Edward, and asked kindly after his health.

The wily Baronet contrived to keep him occupied with that topic for nearly an hour, till he fancied he had established an interest for himself in his destined victim's heart. He told him, with a languid smile, that the moment he saw Beauchamp's arrival in the papers, he had hurried, ill as he was, to pay a visit to his "old chum," and "talk over old times." In short, after laying out all his powers of conversation, he so interested and delighted his quondam associate, that he extorted a reluctant promise from Beauchamp to dine with him the next evening, on the plausible pretext of his being in too delicate health to venture out himself at night-time. Sir Edward departed, apparently in a low mood, but really exulting in the success with which he considered he had opened his infernal campaign. He hurried to the house of one of his comrades in guilt, whom he invited to dinner on the morrow. Now, the fiendish object of this man, Sir Edward Streighton, in asking Beauchamp to dinner, was to revive in his bosom the half-extinguished embers of his love for play! There are documents now in existence to show that Sir Edward and his companions had made the most exact calculations of poor Beauchamp's property, and even arranged the proportions in which the expected spoils were to be shared among the complotters! The whole conduct of the affair was entrusted, at his own instance, to Sir Edward; who, with a smile, declared that he "knew all the crooks and crannies of young Beauchamp's heart;" and that he had already settled his scheme of operations. He was himself to keep for some time in the back-ground, and on no occasion to come forward till he was *sure* of his prey.

At the appointed hour, Beauchamp, though not without having experienced some misgivings in the course of the day, found himself seated at the elegant and luxurious table of Sir Edward, in company with two of the Baronet's "choicest spirits." It would be superfluous to pause over the exquisite wines and luscious cookery which were placed in requisition for the occasion, or the various and brilliant conversation that flashed around the table. Sir Edward was a man of talent and observation; and, foul as were the scenes in which he had latterly passed his life, was full of rapid and brilliant repartee, and piquant sketches of men and manners without end. Like the poor animal whose palate is for a moment tickled with the bait alluring it to destruction, Beauchamp was in ecstasies! There was, besides, such a flattering deference paid to every thing that fell from his lips—so much eager curiosity excited by the accounts he gave of one or two of his foreign adventures—such an interest taken in the arrangements he contemplated for augmenting his estates in ——shire, &c. &c., that Beauchamp never felt better pleased with himself, nor with his companions. About eleven o'clock, one of Sir Edward's friends proposed a rubber at whist, "thinking they had all of them talked one another hoarse," but Sir Edward promptly negatived it. The proposer insisted, but Sir Edward coldly repeated his refusal. "*I* am not tired of my friend's conversation, though they may be of mine! And I fancy, Beauchamp," he continued, shaking his head with a serious air, "you and I have burnt our fingers too often at college, to be desirous of renewing our pranks."

"Why, good God, Sir Edward!" rejoined the pro-

poser, "what do you mean? Are you insinuating that I am fond of *deep play*?—I, I that have been such a sufferer?" How was it that such shallow trickery could not be seen through by a man who knew any thing of the world? The answer is obvious—the victim's penetration had deserted him. Flattery and wine—what will they not lead a man to? In short, the farce was so well kept up, that Beauchamp, fancying he alone stood in the way of the evening's amusements, felt himself called upon to "beg they would not consult *him*, if they were disposed for a rubber, as he would make a hand with the greatest pleasure imaginable." The proposer and his friend looked appealingly to Sir Edward.

"Oh! God forbid that I should hinder you, since you're all so disposed," said the Baronet, with a polite air; and, in a few minutes, the four *friends* were seated at the whist table. *Sir Edward was obliged to send out, and buy, or borrow cards!* "He really so seldom," &c. "especially in his poor health," &c.! There was nothing whatever, in the conduct of the game, calculated to arouse a spark of suspicion. The three confederates acted their parts to admiration, and maintained throughout the matter-of-fact, listless air, of men who have sat down to cards, each out of complaisance to the others. At the end of the second rubber, which was a long one, they paused a while, rose, and betook themselves to refreshments.

"By the way, Apsley," said Sir Edward, suddenly, "have you heard how that extraordinary affair of General ——'s terminated?"

"Decided against him," was the reply; "but I think wrongly. At ——'s," naming a celebrated coterie,

“where the affair was ultimately canvassed, they were equally divided in opinion: and, on the strength of it, the General swears he won’t pay.”

“It is certainly one of the most singular things in the world!”

“Pray, what might the disputed point be?” enquired Beauchamp, sipping a glass of liqueur.

“Oh, merely a bit of town tittle-tattle,” replied Sir Edward, carelessly, “about a Rouge et Noir bet between Lord —— and General ——: I dare say, you would feel no interest in it whatever.”

But Beauchamp *did* feel interested enough to press his host for an account of the matter; and he presently found himself listening to a story told most graphically by Sir Edward, and artfully calculated to interest and inflame the passions of his hearer. Beauchamp drank in eagerly every word. He could not help identifying himself with the parties spoken of. A Satanic smile flickered occasionally over the countenances of the conspirators, as they beheld these unequivocal indications that their prey was entering their toils. Sir Edward represented the hinge of the story to be a moot point at Rouge et Noir: and when he had concluded, an animated discussion arose. Beauchamp took an active part in the dispute, siding with Mr Apsley. Sir Edward got *flustered*! and began to express himself rather heatedly. Beauchamp also felt himself kindling, and involuntarily cooled his ardour with glass after glass of the wine that stood before him. At length, out leaped a bold bet from Beauchamp, that he would make the same point with General ——. Sir Edward shrugged his shoulders, and, with a smile, “declined winning his money,” on a

point clear as the noonday sun ! Mr Hillier, however, who was of Sir Edward's opinion, instantly took Beauchamp ; and, for the symmetry of the thing, Apsley and Sir Edward, in spite of the latter's protestation to Beauchamp, betted highly on their respective opinions. Somebody suggested an adjournment to the "establishment" at —— Street, where they might decide the question ; and thither, accordingly, after great show of reluctance on the part of Sir Edward, they all four repaired.

The reader need not fear that I am going to dilate upon the sickening horrors of a modern "Hell !" for into such a place did Beauchamp find himself introduced. The infernal splendour of the scene by which he was surrounded, smote his soul with a sense of guilty awe the moment he entered, flushed though he was, and unsteady with wine. A spectral recollection of his mother and Ellen, wreathed with the haloes of virtue and purity, glanced across his mind ; and, for a moment, he thought himself really in hell ! Sick and faint, he sat down for a few seconds at an unoccupied table. He felt half determined to rush out from the room. His kind friends perceived his agitation. Sir Edward asked him if he were ill ? But Beauchamp, with a sickly smile, referred his sensations to a heated room, and the unusual quantity of wine he had drunk. Half ashamed of himself, and dreading their banter, he presently rose from his seat, and declared himself recovered. After standing some time beside the Rouge et Noir table, where tremendous stakes were playing for, amidst profound and agitating silence—where he marked the sallow features of General —— and Lord ——, the parties

implicated in the affair mentioned at Sir Edward's table, and who having arranged their dispute, were now over head and ears in a *new* transaction—the four friends withdrew to one of the private tables to talk over their bet. Alas! half-an-hour's time beheld them all at *Hazard!*—Beauchamp playing! and with excitement and enthusiasm equalling any one's in the room. Sir Edward maintained the negligent and reluctant air of a man overpersuaded into acquiescence in the wishes of his companions. Every time that Beauchamp shook the fatal dice-box, the pale face of his mother looked at him; yet still he shook, and still he threw—for he won freely from Apsley and Hillier. About four o'clock, he took his departure, with bank-notes in his pocket-book to the amount of £95, as his evening's winning.

He walked home to his hotel, weary and depressed in spirits, ashamed and enraged at his own weak compliances and irresolution. The thought suddenly struck him, however, that he would make amends for his misconduct, by appropriating the whole of his unhallowed gains to the purchase of jewellery for his mother and cousin. Relieved by this consideration, he threw himself on his bed, and slept, though uneasily, till a late hour in the morning. His first thought on waking was the last that had occupied his mind overnight; but it was in a moment met by another, and more startling reflection—What would Sir Edward, Hillier, and Apsley think of him, dragging them to play, and winning their money, without giving them an opportunity of retrieving their losses! The more he thought of it, the more was he embarrassed; and, as he tossed about on his bed, the suspicion flashed across his disturbed mind, that he was

embroiled with gamblers. With what credit could he skulk from the attack he had himself provoked? Perplexed and agitated with the dilemma he had drawn upon himself, he came to the conclusion, that, at all events, he must invite the Baronet and his friends to dinner that day, and give them their revenge, when he might retreat with honour, and for ever. Every one who reads these pages will anticipate the event.

Gaming is a magical stream; if you do but wade far enough into it to wet the soles of your feet, there is an influence in the waters, which draws you irresistibly in, deeper and deeper, till you are sucked into the roaring vortex and perish. If it were not unduly paradoxical, one might say, with respect to gaming, that he has come to the end, who has made a beginning!

Mr Beauchamp postponed the business which he had himself fixed for transaction that evening, and received Sir Edward—who had found out that he could *now* venture from home at nights—and his two friends, with all appearance of cheerfulness and cordiality. In his heart he felt ill at ease; but his uneasiness vanished with every glass of wine he drank. His guests were all men of conversation; and they took care to select the most interesting topics. Beauchamp was delighted. Some slight laughing allusions were made by Hillier and Apsley to their overnight's adventure; but Sir Edward coldly characterised it as an "absurd affair," and told them they deserved to suffer as they did. This was exactly the signal for which Beauchamp had long been waiting; and he proposed, in a moment, that cards and dice should be brought in to finish the evening with. Hillier and Apsley hesitated; Sir Edward looked at his watch, and talked

of the opera. Beauchamp, however, was peremptory, and down they all sat—and to *Hazard*! Beauchamp was fixedly determined to lose, that evening, a hundred pounds, inclusive of his overnight's winnings; and veiled his purpose so flimsily, that his opponents saw, in a moment, "what he was after." Mr Apsley laid down the dice-box with a haughty air, and said, "Mr Beauchamp, I do not understand you, sir. You are playing neither with boys nor swindlers; and be pleased, besides, to recollect at whose instance we sat down to this evening's *Hazard*."

Mr Beauchamp laughed it off, and protested he did his best. Apsley, apparently satisfied, resumed his play, and their victim *felt* himself in their meshes—that the "snare of the fowler was upon him." They played with various success for about two hours; and Sir Edward was listlessly intimating his intention to have a throw for the first time, "for company's sake," when a card of a young nobleman, one of the most profligate of the profligate set whom Beauchamp had known at Oxford, was brought in.

"Ah! Lord ——!" exclaimed Sir Edward, with joyful surprise—"An age since I saw him! How very strange—how fortunate that I should happen to be here! —Oh, come, Beauchamp"—seeing his host disposed to utter a frigid "not at home"—"come, *must* ask him in! The very best fellow in life!" Now Lord —— and Sir Edward were bosom friends, equally unprincipled, and that very morning had they arranged this most *unexpected* visit of his Lordship! As soon as the ably sustained excitement and enthusiasm of his Lordship had subsided, he, of course, assured them that he should leave

immediately, unless they proceeded with their play, and he stationed himself as an onlooker beside Beauchamp.

The infernal crew now began to see they had it "all their own way." Their tactics might have been finally frustrated, had Beauchamp but possessed sufficient moral courage to yield to the loud promptings of his better judgment, and firmly determined to stop in time. Alas! however, he had taken into his bosom the torpid snake, and kept it there till it revived. In the warmth of excitement he forgot his fears, and his decaying propensities to play were rapidly resuscitated. Before the evening's close, he had entered into the spirit of the game with as keen a relish as a professed gamester! With a sort of frenzy, he proposed bets, which the *cautious* Baronet and his coadjutors hesitated, and, at last, refused to take! About three o'clock they separated; and, on making up accounts, they found that, so equally had profit and loss been shared, that no one had lost or gained more than £20. Beauchamp accepted a seat in Lord ——'s box at the opera for the next evening; and the one following that, he engaged to dine with Apsley. After his guests had retired, he betook himself to bed, with comparatively none of those heart-smitings which had kept him sleepless the night before. The men with whom he had been playing were evidently no professional gamblers, and he felt himself safe in their hands.

To the opera, pursuant to promise, he went, and to Apsley's. At the former he recognised several of his college acquaintance; and at the latter's house he spent a delightful evening, never having said better things, and never being more flatteringly attended to; and the night's social enjoyment was wound up with a friendly

rubber for stakes laughably small. This was Sir Edward's scheme, for he was not, it will be recollected, to "*frighten* the bird." The doomed Beauchamp retired to rest, better satisfied with himself and his friends than ever; for he had transacted a little real business during the day; written two letters to the country, and despatched them, with a pair of magnificent bracelets to Ellen; played the whole evening at unpretending whist, and won two guineas, instead of accompanying Lord —— and Hillier to the establishment in —— Street, where he *might* have lost hundreds. A worthy old English Bishop says, "The devil then maketh sure of us, when we do make sure of ourselves." A wise maxim! Poor Beauchamp now began to feel confidence in his own strength of purpose. He thought he had been weighed in the balance, and *not* found wanting. He was as deeply convinced as ever of the pernicious effects of an inordinate love of play; but had he that passion? No! He recollected the healthful thrill of horror and disgust with which he listened to Lord ——'s entreaties to accompany him to the gaming-house, and was satisfied. He took an early opportunity of writing home, to apprise his mother and cousin that he intended to continue in town a month or six weeks, and assigned satisfactory reasons for his protracted stay. He wrote in the warmest terms to both of them, and said he should be counting the days till he threw himself into their arms. "'Tis this tiresome Twister, our attorney, that must answer for my long stay. There is no quickening his phlegmatic disposition! When I would hurry and press him, he shrugs his shoulders, and says there's no doing law by *steam*. He says he fears the Chancery affairs will prove very

tedious; and they are in such a state just now, that, were I to return into the country, I should be summoned up to town again in a twinkling. Now I *am* here, I will get all this business fairly off my hands. So, by this day six weeks, dearest coz, expect to see at your feet, yours eternally,—H. B.”

But, alas! that day saw Beauchamp in a new and startling character—that of an infatuated gamester!—During that fatal six weeks, he had lost several thousand pounds, and had utterly neglected the business which brought him up to town—for his whole heart was with French Hazard and Rouge et Noir! Even his outward appearance had undergone a strange alteration. His cheeks and forehead wore the sallow hue of dissipation—his eyes were weak and bloodshot—his hands trembled—and every movement indicated the highest degree of nervous irritability. He had become vexed and out of temper with all about him, but especially with himself, and never could “bring himself up to par” till seven or eight o’clock in the evening, at dinner, when he was warming with wine. The first thing in the mornings, also, he felt it necessary to fortify himself against the agitations of the day, by a smart draught of brandy or liqueur! If the mere love of temporary excitement had been sufficient, in the first instance, to allure him on to play, the desire for retrieving his losses now supplied a stronger motive for persevering in his dangerous and destructive career. *Ten thousand pounds*, the lowest amount of his losses, was a sum he could not afford to lose, without very serious inconvenience. Gracious God!—what would his aged mother—what would Ellen say, if they knew the mode and amount of his losses? The

thought distracted him! He had drawn out of his banker's hands all the floating balance he had placed there on arriving in town; and, in short, he had been at last compelled to mortgage one of his favourite estates for L.8000; and how to conceal the transaction from his mother, without making desperate and successful efforts to recover himself at play, he did not know. He had now got inextricably involved with Sir Edward and his set, who never allowed him a moment's time to come to himself, but were ever ready with diversified sources of amusement. Under their damned tutelage, Beauchamp commenced the systematic life of a "man about town," in all except the fouler and grosser vices, to which, believe, he was never addicted.

His money flew about in all directions. He never went to the establishment in —— Street, but his overnight's I.O.U.'s stared him in the face the next morning like reproachful fiends!—and he was daily accumulating bills at the fashionable tradesmen's, to whom he gave higher prices, to ensure longer credit. While he was compelled to write down confidentially to old Pritchard, his agent, for money, almost every third or fourth post, his correspondence with his mother and cousin gradually slackened, and his letters, short as they were, indicated effort and constraint on the part of the writer. It was long, very long, before Mrs Beauchamp suspected that any thing was going wrong. She was completely cajoled by her son's accounts of the complicated and harassing affairs in Chancery, and considered that circumstance fully to account for the brevity and infrequency of his letters. The quicker eyes of Ellen, however, soon saw, in the chilling shortness and formality of his letters

to her, that, even if his regard for her, personally, were not diminishing, he had discovered such pleasurable objects in town, as enabled him to bear, with great fortitude, the *pangs of absence*!

Gaming exerts a deadening influence upon all the faculties of the soul, that are not immediately occupied in its dreadful service. The *heart* it utterly withers; and it was not long, therefore, before Beauchamp was fully aware of the altered state of his feelings towards his cousin, and *satisfied* with them. Play—play—PLAY, was the name of his new and tyrannical mistress! Need I utter such commonplaces as to say, that the more Beauchamp played, the more he lost; that the more he lost, the deeper he played; and that the less chance there was, the more reckless he became? I cannot dwell on this dreary portion of my narrative. It is sufficient to inform the reader, that, employed in the way I have mentioned, Beauchamp protracted his stay in London to *five months*. During this time, he had actually gambled away THREE-FOURTHS of his whole fortune. He was now both ashamed and afraid of returning home. Letters from his poor mother and Ellen accumulated upon him, and often lay for weeks unanswered. Mrs Beauchamp had once remonstrated with him on his allowing *any* of his affairs to keep him so long in town, under the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed with respect to Ellen; but she received such a tart reply from her son, as effectually prevented her future interference. She began to grow very uneasy—and to suspect that something or other unfortunate had happened to her son. Her fears hurried her into a disregard of his menaces; and, at length, she

wrote up privately to Mr Twister, to know what was the state of affairs, and what kept Mr Beauchamp so harassingly employed. The poor old lady received for answer—that the attorney knew of nothing that need have detained Mr Beauchamp in town beyond a week ; and that he had not been to Mr Twister's office for several *months!*

Pritchard, Mr Beauchamp's agent, was a quiet and faithful fellow, and managed all his master's concerns with the utmost punctuality and secrecy. He had been elevated from the rank of a common servant in the family to his present office, which he had filled for thirty years, with unspotted credit. He had been a great favourite with old Mr Beauchamp, who committed him to the kindness of Mrs Beauchamp, and requested her to continue him in his office till his son arrived at his majority. The good old man was, therefore, thoroughly identified with the family interests ; and it was natural that he should feel both disquietude and alarm at the demands for money, unprecedented in respect of amount and frequency, made by Mr Beauchamp during his stay in town. He was kept in profound darkness as to the destination of the money ; and confounded at having to forward up to London the title-deeds and papers relating to most of the property. “ What *can* my young squire be driving at ? ” said Pritchard to himself ; and, as he could devise no satisfactory answer, he began to fume and fret, and to indulge in melancholy speculations. He surmised that “ all was not going on right at London ; ” for he was too much a man of business to be cajoled by the flimsy reasons assigned by Mr Beauchamp for requiring the estate papers. He began to suspect that his young master was “ taking to bad courses ; ” but being enjoined

silence at his peril, he held his tongue, and, shrugging his shoulders, "hoped the best." He longed every day to make, or find an opportunity for communicating with his old mistress; yet how could he break his master's confidence, and risk the threatened penalty!—He received, however, a letter one morning which decided him. The fearful contents were as follows:—

"Dear and faithful old Pritchard,—There are now only two ways in which you can show your regard for me—profound secrecy, and immediate attention to my directions. I have been engaged, for some time, in extensive speculations in London, and have been *dreadfully unfortunate*. I must have fifteen, or, at the very lowest, *ten* thousand pounds, by this day week, or be ruined; and I purpose raising that sum by a mortgage on my property in ———shire. I can see no other possible way of meeting my engagements, without compromising the character of our family—the honour of my name. Let me, therefore, have all the needful papers in time—in two days' time at the latest. Dear old man!—for the love of God, and the respect you bear my father's memory, keep all this to yourself, or consequences may follow which I tremble to think of!—I am, &c. &c.

"HENRY BEAUCHAMP.

"—— *Hotel, 4 o'clock, A. M.*"

This letter was written with evident hurry and trepidation; but not with more than its perusal occasioned the affrighted steward. He dropped it from his hands, elevated them and his eyes towards heaven, and turned deadly pale. He trembled from head to foot; and the only words he uttered were, in a low moaning tone, "Oh, my poor old master! Wouldn't it raise your bones out

of the grave?"—Could he any longer delay telling his mistress of the dreadful pass things were come to?

After an hour or two spent in terror and tears, he resolved, come what might, to set off for the Hall, seek an interview with Mrs Beauchamp, and disclose every thing. He had scarcely got half way, when he was met by one of the Hall servants, who stopped him, saying—"Oh, Mr Steward, I was coming down for you. Mistress is in a *way* this morning, and wants to see you directly."

The old man hardly heard him out, and hurried on as fast as possible to the Hall, which was pervaded with an air of excitement and suspense. He was instantly conducted into Mrs Beauchamp's private room. The good old lady sat in her easy-chair, her pallid features full of grief, and her grey locks straying in disorder from under the border of her cap. Every limb was in a tremor. On one side of her, sat Ellen, in the same agitated condition as her aunt; and, on the other, stood a table with brandy, hartshorn, &c., and an open letter.

"Be seated, Pritchard," said the old lady, faintly. The steward placed his chair beside the table. "Why, what is the matter with *you*, Pritchard?" enquired Miss Beauchamp, startled by the agitation and fright manifested in the steward's countenance. He drew his hand across his forehead, and stammered that he was grieved to see them in such trouble, when he was interrupted by Mrs Beauchamp putting the open letter into his hand, and telling him to read it. The steward could scarcely adjust his glasses; for he trembled like an aspen leaf. He read—

"MADAM,—My client, Lady Hester Gripe, having con-

sented to advance a *farther* sum of £22,000 to Mr Henry Beauchamp, your son, on mortgage of his estates in — shire, I beg to know whether you have any annuity or rent-charge issuing therefrom, and, if so, to what amount. I beg you will consider this enquiry strictly confidential, as between Lady Hester and Mr Beauchamp, or the negotiations will be broken off; for her Ladyship's extreme caution has induced me to break through my promise to Mr Beauchamp, of not allowing you, or any one else to know of the transaction. As, however, Mr Beauchamp said, that, even if you *did* know, it was not of much consequence, I presume I have not gone very far wrong in yielding to her Ladyship's importunities. May I beg the favour of a reply, per return of post?—I have the honour, &c. &c. &c.

“ *Furnival's Inn, London.* ”

Before the staggered steward had got through half this letter, he was obliged to lay it down for a moment or two, to recover from his trepidation.

“ A FARTHER sum ! ” he muttered. He wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead, dashed out the tears from his half-blinded eyes, and resumed his perusal of the letter, which shook in his hands. No one spoke a syllable; and, when he had finished reading, he laid down the letter in silence. Mrs Beauchamp sat leaning back in her chair, with her eyes closed. She murmured something, which the straining ear of the steward could not catch.

“ What was my lady saying, Miss ? ” he enquired. Miss Beauchamp shook her head, without speaking or removing her handkerchief from her face.

“ Well, God's holy will be done ! ” exclaimed Mrs Beauchamp, feebly tasting a little brandy and water ;

"but I'm afraid my poor Henry—and all of us—are ruined!"

"God grant not, my lady! Oh, don't—don't say so, my lady!" sobbed the steward, dropping involuntarily upon his knees, and elevating his clasped hands upwards,—" 'Tis true, my lady," he continued, "Master Henry—for I can't help calling him so—has been a little wild in London—but *all* is not yet gone—oh, no, my lady, no!"

"*You* must, of course, have known all along of his doings—you *must*, Pritchard!" said Mrs Beauchamp, in a low tone.

"Why, yes, my lady, I have—but I've gone down on my knees every blessed night, and prayed that I might find a way of letting you know"——

"*Why* could you not have told me?" enquired Mrs Beauchamp, looking keenly at the steward.

"Because, my lady, I was his steward, and bound to keep his confidence. He would have discharged me the moment I had opened my lips; he told me so often!"

Mrs Beauchamp made no reply. She saw the worthy man's dilemma, and doubted not his integrity, though she had entertained momentarily a suspicion of his guilty acquiescence.

"Have you ever heard, Pritchard, how the money has gone in London?"

"Never a breath, my lady, that I could rely on."

"What have you *heard*?—That he frequents gaming-houses?" enquired Mrs Beauchamp, her features whitening as she went on. The steward shook his head. There was another mournful pause.

"Now, Pritchard," said Mrs Beauchamp, with an

effort to muster up all her calmness—"tell me, as in the sight of God, how much money has my son made away with since he left?"

The steward paused and hesitated.

"I must not be trifled with, Pritchard," continued Mrs Beauchamp, solemnly, and with increasing agitation. The steward seemed calculating a moment.

"Why, my lady, if I must be plain, I'm afraid that twenty thousand pounds would not cover"—

"TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS!" screamed Miss Beauchamp, springing out of her chair wildly; but her attention was, in an instant, absorbed by her aunt, who, on hearing the sum named by the steward, after moving her lips for a moment or two, as if she were trying to speak, suddenly fell back in her seat, and swooned.

To describe the scenes of consternation and despair which ensued, would be impossible. Mrs Beauchamp's feelings were several times urging her on the very borders of madness; and Miss Beauchamp looked the image of speechless, breathless horror. At length, however, Mrs Beauchamp succeeded in overcoming her feelings—for she was a woman of unusual strength of mind—and instantly addressed herself to meet the naked horrors of the case, and see if it were possible to discover or apply a remedy. After a day's anxious thought, and the *show* of a consultation with her distracted niece, she decided on the line of operation she intended to pursue.

To return, however, to her son: Things went on, as might be supposed from the situation in which we left him, worse and worse. Poor Beauchamp's life might justly be said to be a perpetual frenzy—passed in alternate paroxysms of remorse, despair, rage, fear, and all

the other baleful passions that can tear and distract the human soul. He had become stupified ; and could not fully comprehend the enormous ruin which he had precipitated upon himself—crushing at once “ mind, body, and estate.” His motions seemed actuated by a species of diabolical influence. He saw the nest of hornets which he had lit upon, yet would not forsake the spot ! Alas ! Beauchamp was not the first who has felt the fatal *fascination* of play, the utter obliviousness of consequences which it induces ! The demons who fluttered about him, no longer thought of masking themselves, but stood boldly in all their naked hideousness before him. For weeks together, he had one continual run of bad luck ; yet still he lived and gambled on, from week to week, from day to day, from hour to hour, in the delusive hope of recovering himself. His heart was paralyzed—its feelings all smothered beneath the perpetual pressure of a gamester’s anxieties. It is not, therefore, difficult for the reader to conceive the ease with which he dismissed the less and less frequently intruding images—the pale reproachful faces—of his mother and cousin !

Sir Edward Streighton, the most consummate tactician, sure, that ever breathed, had won thousands from Beauchamp, without affording him a tangible opportunity of breaking with him. On the contrary, the more Beauchamp became involved—the deeper he sank into the whirlpool of destruction—the closer he clung to Sir Edward ; as if clinging to the devil in hell, would save one from its fires ! The wily Baronet had contrived to make himself, in a manner, indispensable to Beauchamp. It was Sir Edward, who taught him the quickest way of turning lands into cash—Sir Edward, who familiarized

him with the correctest principles of betting and handling the dice—Sir Edward, who put him in the way of evading and defying his minor creditors—Sir Edward, who feasted and fêted him out of his bitter ennui and thoughts of ——shire—Sir Edward, who lent him hundreds at a moment's warning, and gave him the longest credit !

Is it really conceivable that Beauchamp could not see through the plausible scoundrel ? enquires, perhaps, a reader. No, he did not—till the plot began to develop itself in the latter acts of the tragedy ! And even when he did, he still went on—and on—and on—trusting that, in time, he should outwit the subtle devil. Though he was a little shocked at finding himself so easily capable of such a thing, he resolved, at last, in the forlorn hope of retrieving his circumstances, to meet *fraud with fraud*. A delusion not uncommon among the desperate victims of gambling, is the notion that they have suddenly hit on some trick by which they must infallibly win. This is the *ignis fatuus* which often lights them to the fatal verge. Such a crotchet had latterly been flitting through the fancy of Beauchamp ; and one night—or rather morning—after revolving the scheme over and over again in his racked brain, he started out of bed, struck a light, seized a pack of cards, and, shivering with cold—for it was winter—sat calculating and manœuvring with them till he had satisfied himself of the accuracy of his plan ; when he threw them down, blew out his candle, and leaped into bed again in a fit of guilty ecstasy. The more he turned the project in his mind, the more and more feasible did it appear. He resolved to intrust no one breathing with his secret. Confident of success, and

that with but little effort he had it in his power *to break the bank*, whenever, and as often as he pleased, he determined to put his plan into execution in a day or two, on a large scale; stake every penny he could possibly scrape together, and win triumphantly. He instantly set about procuring the requisite funds. His attorney—a gambler himself, whom he had latterly picked up, at the instance of Hillier, as “a monstrously convenient fellow”—soon contrived to cash his I.O.U.’s to the amount of £5000, on discovering that he had still available property in —shire, which he learned at a confidential interview with the solicitor in Furnival’s Inn, who was negotiating the loan of £22,000 from Lady Gripe.* He returned to make the hazardous experiment on the evening of the day on which he received the £5000 from his attorney. On the morning of that day, he was, farther, to hear from his steward in the country respecting the mortgage of his last and best property.

That was a memorable—a terrible day to Beauchamp. It *began* with doubt—suspense—disappointment; for, after awaiting the call of the postman, shaking with agitation, he caught a glimpse of his red jacket *passing* by his door—on the other side of the street. Almost frantic, he threw up the window, and called out to him—but the man had “none to-day.” Beauchamp threw himself on his sofa, in agony unutterable. It was the first time that old Pritchard had ever neglected to return an an-

* It is my intention, on a future occasion, to publish some account of the extraordinary means by which this old woman amassed a splendid fortune. She was an inveterate swindler at cards; and so successful that, from her gains at ordinary play, she drew a capital with which she traded in the manner mentioned above.

swer in course of post, when never so slightly requested. A thousand fears assailed him. Had his letter miscarried? Was Pritchard ill, dying, or dead? Had he been frightened into a disclosure to Mrs Beauchamp? And did his MOTHER, at length—did ELLEN—know of his dreadful doings? The thought was too frightful to dwell upon!—thoroughly unnerved, he flew to *brandy*—fiery fiend, lighting up in the brain the flames of madness!—He scarcely knew how to rest during the interval between breakfast and dinner; for, at seven o'clock, he, together with the rest of the infernal crew, were to dine with Apsley. There was to be a strong muster; for one of the *decoys* had entrapped a wealthy simpleton, who was to make his “first appearance” that evening. After walking, for an hour, to and fro, he set out to call upon me. He was at my house by twelve o'clock. During his stay in town, I had frequently received him in quality of a patient, for his trifling fits of indisposition, and low spirits. I had looked upon him merely as a fashionable young fellow, who was “upon town” doing his best to earn a little notoriety, such as was sought after by most young men of *spirit*—and fortune! I also had been able to gather from what he let fall at several interviews, that the uneven spirits he enjoyed, were owing to his gambling propensities; that his excitement or depression alternated with the good or ill luck he had at play. I felt interest in him; for there was about him an air of ingenuousness and straightforwardness, which captivated every one who spoke with him. His manners had all the ease and blandness of the finished gentleman; and when last I saw him, which was about two months before, he appeared in good

health and cheerful spirits—a very fine, if not strictly handsome man. But *now*, when he stood before me, wasted in person, and haggard in feature—full of irritability and petulance—I could scarcely believe him the same man!—I was going to ask him some question or other, when he hastily interrupted me, by extending towards me his two hands, which shook almost like those of a man in the palsy, exclaiming—“This—*this*, Doctor, is what I have come about. Can you cure *THIS*—by six o’clock to-day?” There was a wildness in his manner, which led me to suspect that his intellect was disordered. He hurried on, before I had time to get in a word—“If you cannot steady my nerves for a few hours, I am”——he suddenly paused, and, with some confusion, repeated his question. The extravagant impetuosity of his gestures, and his whole demeanour, alarmed me.

“Mr Beauchamp,” said I, seriously, “it is now two months since you honoured me with a visit; and your appearance since then is wofully changed. Permit me, as a respectful friend, to ask whether”——He rose abruptly from his seat, and, in a tone bordering on insult, replied, “Dr ——, I came, not to gratify curiosity, but to receive your advice on the state of my health. If you are not disposed to afford it me, I am intruding.”

“You mistake me, Mr Beauchamp,” I replied, calmly, “motives and all. I do not wish to pry into your affairs. I desired only to ascertain whether or not your mind was at ease.” While I was speaking, he seemed boiling over with suppressed irritability; and when I had done, he took his hat and stick, flung a guinea on my desk; and, before I could recover from the astonish-

ment his extraordinary behaviour occasioned me, strode out of the room.

How he contrived to pass the day, he never knew; but, about five o'clock, he retired to his dressing-room, to prepare for dinner.* His agitation had reached such a height, that, after several ineffectual attempts to shave himself, he was compelled to send for some one to perform that operation for him. When the duties of the dressing-room were completed, he returned to his sitting-room, took from his escritoire the doomed bank-notes for £5000, and placed them in his pocket-book. A dense film floated before his eyes, when he attempted to look over the respective amounts of the bills, to see that all was correct. He then seized a pack of cards, and tried over and over again, to test the accuracy of his calculations. He laid them aside, when he had satisfied himself—locked his door, opened his desk, and took out pen and paper. He then, with his penknife, pricked the point of one of his fingers, filled his pen with the blood issuing from it, and wrote, in letters of blood, a solemn oath, that, if he were but successful that evening, in “winning back his own,” he would forsake cards and dice for ever, and never again be found within the precincts of a gaming-house, to the latest hour of his life. I have seen that singular and affecting document. The letters, especially those forming the signature, are more like the tremulous handwriting of a man of eighty, than of one but twenty-one! Perceiving that he was late, he hurriedly affixed a black seal to his signature—once

* Mr Beauchamp had removed from his hotel into private lodgings near Pall Mall, about a month before the above-mentioned visit to me.

more ran his eye over the doomed £5000, and sallied out to dinner.

When he reached Mr Apsley's, he found all the company assembled, apparently in high spirits, and all eager for dinner. You would not have thought of the black hearts that beat beneath such gay and pleasing exteriors as were collected round Apsley's table! Not a syllable of allusion was made during dinner-time to the subject which filled every one's thoughts—play! As if by mutual consent, that seemed the only interdicted topic; but as soon as dinner and dessert, both of them first-rate, were over, a perfectly understood *pause* took place; and Beauchamp, who, with the aid of frequent draughts of champagne, had worked himself up to the proper pitch, was the first to propose with eagerness, the fatal adjournment to the gaming-table. Every one rose in an instant from his seat as if by appointed signal, and in less than five minutes' time, they were all, with closed doors, seated around the tables;—

Here piles of cards, and there the damned dice.

They opened with Hazard. Beauchamp was the first who threw, and he lost; but, as the stake was comparatively trifling, he neither was, nor appeared to be annoyed. He was saving himself for Rouge et Noir!—The rest of the company proceeded with the game, and got gradually into deeper play, till, at length, heavy betting was begun. Beauchamp, who declined joining them, sat watching, with peculiar feelings of mingled sympathy and contempt, the poor fellow whom the gang were "pigeoning." How painfully it reminded him of his own initiation! A throng of bitter recollections crowded

irresistibly through his mind, as he sat for a while with leisure for contemplation. The silence that was maintained was broken only by the rattling of the dice-box, and an occasional whisper when the dice were thrown.

The room in which they were sitting, was furnished with splendour and elegance. The walls were entirely concealed beneath valuable pictures in massive and tasteful frames, the gilding of which glistened with a peculiarly rich effect beneath the light of a noble ormolu lamp, suspended from the ceiling. Ample curtains of yellow flowered satin, drawn closely together, concealed the three windows with their rich draperies; and a few Gothic-fashioned bookcases, well filled, were stationed near the corners of the room, with rare specimens of Italian statuary placed upon them. The furniture was all of the most fashionable and elegant patterns; and as the trained eye of Beauchamp scanned it over, and marked the correct taste with which every thing was disposed, the thought forced itself upon him—"How many have been beggared to pay for all this!" His heart fluttered. He gazed on the flushed features, the eager eyes, the agitated gestures of those who sat at the table. Directly opposite was Sir Edward Streighton, looking attentively at the caster—his fine expansive forehead bordered with slight streaks of black hair, and his large lustrous eyes glancing like lightning from the thrower to the dice, and from the dice to the betters. His features, regular, and once even handsome, bore now the deep traces of long and harrowing anxiety. "Oh, that one," thought Beauchamp, "so capable of better things, bearing on his brow nature's signet of superiority, should have sunk into—a *swindler*!" While these thoughts

were passing through his mind, Sir Edward suddenly looked up, and his eyes settled for an instant on Beauchamp. Their expression almost withered him! He thought he was gazing on "the dark and guilty one," who had coldly led him up to ruin's brink, and was waiting to precipitate him. His thoughts then wandered away to long banished scenes—his aged mother, his ruined forsaken Ellen, both of whom he was begging, and breaking their hearts. A mist seemed diffused through the room—his brain reeled; his long-stunned heart revived for a moment, and smote him heavily. "Oh! that I had but an opportunity—never so slight an opportunity," he thought, "of breaking from this horrid enthrallment, at *any* cost!" He started from his painful reverie, and stepped to a side-table, on which a large bowl of champagne punch had just been placed, and sought solace in its intoxicating fumes. He resumed his seat at the table; and he had looked on scarcely a few minutes, before he felt a sudden, unaccountable impulse to join in at Hazard. He saw Apsley placing in his pocket-book some bank-notes, which he had that moment received from the poor victim before spoken of—and instantly betted with him heavily on the next throw. Apsley, somewhat surprised, but not ruffled, immediately took him; the dice were thrown—and, to his own astonishment, and that of all present, Beauchamp won £300—actually, *bona fide*, won £300 from Apsley, who for once, was off his guard! The loser was nettled, and could with difficulty conceal his chagrin; but he had seen, while Beauchamp was in the act of opening his pocket-book, the amount of one or two of his largest bills, and his passion subsided.

At length his hour arrived. Rouge et Noir followed Hazard, and Beauchamp's pulse quickened. When it came to his turn, he took out his pocket-book and coolly laid down stakes which aimed at the bank. Not a word was spoken; but looks of wonder and doubt glanced darkly around the table. What was the fancied manœuvre which Beauchamp now proceeded to practise I know not; for, thank God, I am ignorant—except on hearsay—of both the principles and practice of gaming. The eagle eye of Apsley, the *tailleur*, was on Beauchamp's every movement. He tried—he LOST, *half* his large stake! He pressed his hand upon his forehead—he saw that every thing depended on his calmness. The voice of Apsley sounded indistinctly in his ears, calling out, “*après!*” Beauchamp suffered his stakes to remain, and be determined by the next event. He still had confidence in his scheme; but, alas! the bubble at length burst, and Beauchamp, in a trice, found himself minus £3000. All hope was now over, for his trick was clearly worth nothing, and he had lost every earthly opportunity of recovering himself. YET HE WENT ON—and on—and on—and on ran the losing colour, till Beauchamp lost every thing he had brought with him! He sat down, sunk his head upon his breast, and a ghastly hue overspread his face. He was offered unlimited credit. Apsley gave him a slip of paper with I.O.U. on it, telling him to fill it up with his name, and any sum he chose. Beauchamp threw it back, exclaiming, in an under tone, “No—swindled out of *all*.”

“*What* did you say, sir?” enquired Apsley, rising from the table, and approaching his victim.

“Merely that I had been swindled out of all my for-

tune," replied Beauchamp, without rising from his seat. There was a dead silence.

"But, my good sir! don't you know that such language will never *do*?" enquired Apsley, in a cold contemptuous tone, and with a manner exquisitely irritating.

Half maddened with his losses—with despair and fury—Beauchamp sprung out of his chair towards Apsley, and, with an absolute *howl*, dashed both his fists into his face. Consternation seized every one present. Table, cards, and bank-notes, all were deserted, and some threw themselves round Beauchamp, others round Apsley, who, sudden as had been the assault upon him, had so quickly thrown up his arms, that he parried the chief force of Beauchamp's blow, and received but a slight injury over his right eye.

"Poh! poh! the boy is *drunk*," he exclaimed, coolly, observing his frantic assailant struggling with those who held him.

"Ruffian! swindler! liar!" gasped Beauchamp. Apsley laughed aloud.

"What! dare not you strike me in return?" roared Beauchamp.

"Ay, ay, my fine fellow," replied Apsley, with imperturbable nonchalance; "but dare *you* have struck me when you were in cool blood, and I on my guard?"

"*Struck* you, indeed, you abhorred"—

"Let us see, then, what we can do in the morning, when we've slept over it," retorted Apsley, pitching his card towards him contemptuously. "But, in the meantime, we must send for constables, unless our young friend here becomes quiet. Come, Streighton, you are

croupier—come, Hillier—Bruton—all of you come—play out the stakes, or we shall forget where we were.”

Poor Beauchamp seemed suddenly calmed when Apsley's card was thrown towards him, and with such cold scorn. He pressed his hands to his bursting temples, turned his despairing eyes upwards, and muttered, as if he were half choked, “Not yet,—not yet !” He paused—and the dreadful paroxysm seemed to subside. He threw one of his cards to Apsley, exclaiming hoarsely, “When, where, and how you will, sir !”

“Why, come now, Beau, that's right—*that's* like a man !” said Apsley, with mock civility. “Suppose we say to-morrow morning ? I have cured you of roguery to-night, and, with the blessing of God, will cure you of cowardice to-morrow. But, pardon me, your last stakes are forfeit,” he added, abruptly, seeing Beauchamp approach the spot where his last stake, a bill for £100, was lying, not having been taken up. He looked appealingly to the company, who decided instantly against him. Beauchamp, with the hurry and agitation consequent on his assault upon Apsley, had forgotten that he had really played away the note.

“Well, sir, there remains nothing to keep me here,” said Beauchamp, calmly—with the calmness of despair—“except settling our morning's meeting. Name your friend, sir,” he continued, sternly—yet his heart was breaking within him.

“Oh—ay,” replied Apsley, carelessly looking up from the cards he was shuffling and arranging. “Let me see. Hillier, will you do the needful for me ? I leave every thing in your hands.” After vain attempts to bring about a compromise—for your true gamblers hate such affairs,

not from personal fear, but the publicity they occasion to their doings—matters were finally arranged, Sir Edward Streighton undertaking for Beauchamp. The hour of meeting was half-past six o'clock in the morning; and the place a field near Knightsbridge. The unhappy Beauchamp then withdrew, after shaking Sir Edward by the hand, who promised to call at his lodgings by four o'clock—"for we shall break up by that time, I dare say," he whispered.

When the door was closed upon Beauchamp, he reeled off the steps and staggered along the street like a drunken man. Whether or not he was deceived he knew not; but, in passing under the windows of the room where the fiendish conclave were sitting, he fancied he heard the sound of loud laughter. It was about two o'clock of a winter's morning. The snow fell fast, and the air was freezingly cold. Not a soul but himself seemed stirring. A watchman, seeing his unsteady gait, crossed the street, touched his hat, and asked if he should call him a coach; but he was answered with such a ghastly imprecation, that he slunk back in silence. Tongue cannot tell the distraction and misery with which Beauchamp's soul was shaken. Hell seemed to have lit its raging fires within him. He felt affrighted at being alone in the desolate, dark, deserted streets. His last six months' life seemed unrolled suddenly before him, like a blighting scroll, written in letters of fire. Overcome by his emotions, his shaking knees refused their support, and he sat down on the steps of a house in Piccadilly. He told me afterwards, that he distinctly recollected feeling for some implement of destruction; and that, if he had discovered his penknife, he should assuredly have

cut his throat. After sitting on the stone for about a quarter of an hour, bareheaded—for he had removed his hat, that his burning forehead might be cooled—he made towards his lodgings. He thundered impetuously at the door, and was instantly admitted. His shivering, half-asleep servant fell back before his master's affrighting countenance, and glaring bloodshot eyes. "Lock the door, sir, and follow me to my room," said Beauchamp, in a loud voice.

"Sir—sir—sir," stammered the servant, as if he were going to ask some question.

"Silence, sir!" thundered his master; and the man, laying down his candle on the stairs, went and barred the door. Beauchamp hurried up stairs, and opened the door of his sitting-room. He was astonished and alarmed to find a blaze of light in the room. Suspecting fire, he rushed into the middle of the room, and beheld—his mother and cousin bending towards him, and staring fixedly at him with the hue and expression of two marble images of horror! His mother's white hair hung dishevelled down each side of her ghastly features; and her eyes, with those of her niece, who sat beside her, clasping her aunt convulsively round the waist, seemed on the point of starting from their sockets. They moved not—they spoke not. The hideous apparition vanished in an instant from the darkening eyes of Beauchamp, for he dropped the candle he held in his hand, and fell at full length senseless on the floor.

* * * * *

It was no ocular delusion—nothing spectral—but HORROR looking out through breathing flesh and blood, in the persons of Mrs Beauchamp and her niece.

The resolution which Mrs Beauchamp had formed on an occasion which will be remembered by the reader, was to go up direct to London, and try the effect of a sudden appearance before her erring, but, she hoped, not irreclaimable son. Such an interview might *startle* him into a return to virtue. Attended by the faithful Pritchard, they had arrived in town that very day, put up at a hotel in the neighbourhood, and, without pausing to take refreshments, hurried to Mr Beauchamp's lodgings, which they reached only two hours after he had gone out to dinner. Seeing his desk open, and a paper lying upon it, the old lady took it up, and, freezing with fright, read the oath before-named, evidently written in *blood*. Her son, then, was gone to the gaming-table in the spirit of a forlorn hope, and was that night to complete his and their ruin! Yet what could they do? Mr Beauchamp's valet did not know where his master was gone to dinner, nor did any one in the house, or they would have sent off instantly to apprize him of their arrival. As it was, however, they were obliged to wait for it; and it may, therefore, be conceived in what an ecstasy of agony these two poor ladies had been sitting, without tasting wine or food, till half-past two o'clock in the morning, when they heard his startling knock—his fierce voice speaking in curses to the valet—and, at length, beheld him rush, madman-like, into their presence, as has been described.

When the valet came up-stairs from fastening the street-door, he saw the sitting-room door wide open; and peeping through, on his way up to bed, was confounded to see three prostrate figures on the floor—his master here, and there the two ladies, locked in one

another's arms, all motionless. He hurried to the bell, and pulled it till it broke, but not before it had rung such a startling peal, as woke every body in the house, who presently heard him shouting, at the top of his voice, "Murder! murder! murder!" All the affrighted inmates were, in a few seconds, in the room, half-dressed, and their faces full of terror. The first simultaneous impression on the minds of the group was, that the persons lying on the floor had been *poisoned*; and under such impression was it that I and two neighbouring surgeons were summoned on the scene. By the time I had arrived, Mrs Beauchamp was reviving; but her niece had swooned away again. The first impulse of the mother, as soon as her tottering limbs could support her weight, was to crawl trembling to the insensible body of her son. Supported in the arms of two female attendants, who had not as yet been able to lift her from the floor, she leant over the prostrate form of Beauchamp, and murmured, "O, Henry! Henry! Love!—my only love!" Her hand played slowly over his damp features, and strove to part the hair from the forehead—but it suddenly ceased to move—and, on looking narrowly at her, she was found to have swooned again. Of all the sorrowful scenes it has been my fate to witness, I never encountered one of deeper distress than this.—Had I known at the time the relative situations of the parties!

I directed all my attentions to Mr Beauchamp, while the other medical gentlemen busied themselves with Mrs Beauchamp and her niece. I was not quite sure whether my patient were not in a fit of epilepsy or apoplexy, for he lay motionless, drawing his breath at long and painful intervals, with a little occasional con-

vulsive twitching of the features. I had his coat taken off immediately, and bled him from the arm copiously; soon after which, he recovered his consciousness, and allowed himself to be led to bed. He had hardly been undressed, before he fell fast asleep. His mother was bending over him in speechless agony—for, ill and feeble as she was, we could not prevail on her to go to bed—and I was watching both with deep interest and curiosity, convinced that I was witnessing a glimpse of some domestic tragedy, when there was heard a violent knocking and ringing at the street door. Every one started, and, with alarm, enquired what that *could* be! Who could be seeking admission at four o'clock in the morning?

Sir Edward Streighton!—whose cabriolet, with a case of duelling pistols on the seat, was standing at the door, waiting to convey himself and Beauchamp to the scene of possible slaughter fixed on overnight. He would take no denial from the servant; declared his business to be of the most pressing kind; and affected to disbelieve the fact of Beauchamp's illness—"It was all miserable fudge;" and he was heard muttering something about "*cowardice!*" The strange pertinacity of Sir Edward brought me down stairs. He stood fuming and cursing in the hall; but started on seeing me come down, with a candle in my hand, and he turned pale.

"Doctor ——!" he exclaimed, taking off his hat; for he had once or twice seen me, and instantly recognised me—"Why, in the name of heaven, what is the matter? Is he ill? Is he dead? What?"

"Sir Edward," I replied, coldly, "Mr Beauchamp is in dangerous, if not dying, circumstances."

"*Dying* circumstances!" he echoed, with an alarmed

air. "Why—has he—has he attempted to commit suicide?" he stammered.

"No, but he has had a fit, and is insensible in bed. You will permit me to say, Sir Edward," I continued, a suspicion occurring to me of his design in calling, "that this untimely visit looks as if"——

"That is my business, Doctor," he replied, haughtily, "not yours. My errand is of the highest importance; and it is fitting I should be assured, on your solemn word of honour, of the *reality* of Mr Beauchamp's illness."

"Sir Edward Streighton," said I, indignantly, "you have had my answer, which you may believe or disbelieve, as you think proper; but I will, at all events, take good care that you do not ascend one of these stairs to-day."

"I understand it all!" he answered, with a significant scowl, and left the house. I then hastened back to my patient, whom I now viewed with greater interest than before; for I saw that he was to have fought a duel that morning. Coupling present appearances with Mr Beauchamp's visit to me the day before, and the known character of Sir Edward as a professed gambler, the key to the whole seemed to me, that there had been a gaming-house quarrel.

The first sensible words that Mr Beauchamp spoke, were to me:—"Has Sir Edward Streighton called?—Is it four o'clock yet?" and he started up in his bed, staring wildly around him. Seeing himself in bed—candles about him—and *me* at his side—he exclaimed, "Why, I recollect nothing of it! Am I wounded? What has become of Apsley?" He placed his hand on the arm from which he had been bled, and, feeling it

bandaged—"Ah!—in the arm—How strange that I have forgotten it all!—How did I get on at Hazard and Rouge et Noir?—Doctor, am I badly wounded?—Bone broken?"

My conjecture was now verified beyond a doubt. He dropped asleep, from excessive exhaustion, while I was gazing at him. I had answered none of his questions—which were proposed in a dreamy unconnected style, indicating that his senses were disturbed. Finding that I could be of no farther service at present, I left him, and betook myself to the room to which Mrs Beauchamp had been removed, while I was conversing with Sir Edward. I found her in bed, attended by Miss Beauchamp, who, though still extremely languid, and looking the picture of broken-heartedness, had made a great exertion to rouse herself. Mrs Beauchamp looked dreadfully ill. The nerves seemed to have received a shock from which she might be long in recovering. "Now, what is breaking these ladies' hearts?" thought I, as I looked from one agitated face to the other.

"How is my son?" enquired Mrs Beauchamp, faintly.

I told her I thought there was no danger; and that, with repose, he would soon recover.

"Pray, madam, allow me to ask—Has he had any sudden fright? I suspect"—Both shook their heads, and hung them down.

"Well—he is alive, thank Heaven—but a *beggar!*" murmured Mrs Beauchamp. "Oh, Doctor, he hath *fallen among thieves!* They have robbed, and would have slain my son—my first-born—my only son!"

I expressed deep sympathy. I said, "I suspect, madam, that something very unfortunate has happened."

She interrupted me, by asking, after a pause, if I knew nothing of his practices in London for the last few months, as she had seen my name several times mentioned in his letters, as his medical adviser. I made no reply. I did not even hint my suspicions that he had been a frequenter of the gaming-table; but my looks startled her.

“ Oh, Doctor——, for the love of God, be frank, and save a widowed mother's heart from breaking ! Is there no door open for him to escape ? ”

Seeing they could extract little or no satisfactory explanation from me, they ceased asking, and resigned themselves to tears and sorrow. After rendering them what little service was in my power, and looking in at Mr Beauchamp's room, where I found him still in a comfortable sleep, I took my departure; for the dull light of a winter morning was already stealing into the room, and I had been there ever since a little before four o'clock. All my way home I felt sure that my patient was one of the innumerable victims of gambling, and had involved his family in his ruin.

Mr Beauchamp, with the aid of quiet and medicine, soon recovered sufficiently to leave his bed; but his mind was evidently ill at ease. Had I known at the time what I was afterwards apprized of, with what intense and sorrowful interest should I have regarded him !

The next week was all agony, humiliation, confessions, and forgiveness. The only one item in the black catalogue which he omitted or misrepresented, was the duel he was to have fought. He owned, after much pressing, in order to quiet his mother and cousin, that he *had* fought, and escaped unhurt. But Beauchamp, in his

own mind, was resolved, at all events, to give Apsley the meeting on the very earliest opportunity. His own *honour* was at stake!—his own revenge was to be sated! The first thing, therefore, that Beauchamp did, after he was sufficiently recovered to be left alone, was to drop a hasty line to Sir Edward Streighton, informing him that he was now ready and willing—nay, anxious to give Apsley the meeting, which he had been prevented doing only by his sudden and severe illness. He entreated Sir Edward to continue, as heretofore, his *friend*, and to hasten the matter as much as possible; adding that, whatever event might attend it, was a matter of utter indifference to one who was weary of life. Sir Edward, who began to wish himself out of a very disagreeable affair, returned him a prompt, polite, but not very cordial answer; the substance of which was, that Apsley, who happened to be with Sir Edward when Beauchamp's letter arrived, was perfectly ready to meet him at the place formerly appointed, at seven o'clock on the ensuing morning. Beauchamp was somewhat shocked at the suddenness of the affair. How was he to part, overnight—possibly for ever—from his beloved, and injured as beloved, mother and cousin? Whatever might be the issue of the affair, what a monster of perfidy and ingratitude must he appear to them!

Full of these bitter, distracting thoughts, he locked his room door, and proceeded to make his will. He left “every thing he had remaining on earth, in any shape,” to his mother, except a hundred guineas to his cousin, to buy a mourning ring. That over, and some few other arrangements completed, he repaired, with a heart that smote him at every step, to his mother's bedside; for it

was night, and the old lady, besides, scarcely ever left her bed. The unusual fervour of his embraces, together with momentary fits of absence, might have challenged observation and suspicion ; but they did not. He told me afterwards, that the anguish he suffered while repeating and going through the customary evening adieus to his mother and cousin, might have atoned for years of guilt !

After a nearly sleepless night, Beauchamp rose about five o'clock, and dressed himself. On quitting his room, perhaps the last time he should quit it alive, he had to pass by his mother's door. There he fell down on his knees ; and continued, with clasped hands and closed eyes, till his smothering emotions warned him to be gone. He succeeded in getting out of the house without alarming any one ; and, muffled in his cloak, made his way, as fast as possible, to Sir Edward Streighton's. It was a miserable morning. The untrodden snow lay nearly a foot deep on the streets, and was yet fluttering fast down. Beauchamp found it so fatiguing to *plunther* on through the deep snow, and was so benumbed with cold, that he called a coach. He had great difficulty in rousing the driver, who, spite of the bitter inclemency of the weather, was sitting on his box, poor fellow, fast asleep, and even snoring—a complete hillock of snow, which lay nearly an inch thick upon him. How Beauchamp envied him ! The very horses, too, lean and scraggy as they looked—fast asleep—their scanty harness all snow-laden—how he envied *them* !

It was nearly six o'clock, when Beauchamp reached Sir Edward's residence. The Baronet was up, and waiting for him.

"How d'ye do, Beauchamp—how d'ye do?—How the d—— are you to fight in such a fog as this?" he enquired, looking through the window, and shuddering at the cold.

"It must be managed, I suppose. Put us up as close as you like," replied Beauchamp, gloomily.

"I've done all in my power, my dear fellow, to settle matters amicably, but 'tis in vain, I'm afraid. You *must* exchange shots, you know!—I have no doubt, however," he continued, with a significant smile, "that the thing will be properly conducted. *Life is valuable, Beauchamp!* You understand me?"

"It is *not* to me—I hate Apsley as I hate hell."

"My God, Beauchamp! what a bloody humour you have risen in!" exclaimed the Baronet, with an anxious smile. He paused, as if for an answer, but Beauchamp continued silent.—"Ah, then, the sooner to business the better. And harkee, Beauchamp," said Sir Edward, briskly, "have your wits about you, for Apsley, let me tell you, is a splendid shot!"

"Pooh!" exclaimed Beauchamp, smiling bitterly. He felt cold from head to foot, and even trembled, for a thousand fond thoughts gushed over him. He felt faint, and would have asked for a glass of wine or spirits; but after Sir Edward's last remark, that was out of the question. It might be misconstrued!

They were on the ground by seven o'clock. It had ceased snowing, and, in its stead, a small drizzling rain was falling. The fog continued so dense as to prevent their seeing each other distinctly at more than a few yards' distance. This puzzled the parties not a little and threatened to interfere with *business*.

"Every thing, by ——, is against us to-day!" exclaimed Sir Edward, placing under his arm the pistol he was loading, and buttoning his great-coat up to the chin—"this fog will hinder your seeing one another, and this —— rain will soak through to the priming! In fact, you must be put up within eight or ten feet of one another."

"Settle all that as soon, and as you like," replied Beauchamp, walking away a few steps.

"Hallo—here!—here!" cried Sir Edward—"Here! here we are, Hillier," seeing three figures, within a few yards of them, searching about for them. Apsley had brought with him Hillier and a young surgeon.

The fog thickened rapidly as soon as they had come together, and Apsley and Beauchamp took their stand at a little distance from their respective friends.

"Any chance of apology?" enquired Hillier—a keen-eyed, hawk-nosed *ci-devant militaire*.

"The devil a bit. Horridly savage."

"Then let us make haste," replied Hillier, with *sang froid*.

"Apsley got —— drunk after you left this morning, and I've had only half an hour's sleep," continued Hillier, little suspecting that every word they were saying was overheard by Beauchamp, who, shrouded by the fog, was standing at but three or four yards' distance.

"Apsley drunk? Then 'twill give Beauchamp, poor devil, a bit of a chance."

"And this fog! How does he stand it? Cool?"

"As a cucumber. That is to say, he is *cold*—very *cold*—ha, ha! But I don't think he funks either. Told me he hated Apsley like hell, and we might put him up as we liked. What does *your* man say?"

“ Oh, full of ‘*pooh-poohs*!’ and calls it a mere *bagatelle*.”

“ Do mischief?—eh?”

“ Oh—he’s going to try for the arm or knee, for the fellow hurt his eye the other night.”

“ What—in this fog! My ——!”

“ Oh, true! Forgot that—Ha, ha!—What’s to be done?—Come, it’s clearing off a bit.”

“ I say, Hillier,” whispered Sir Edward, in a low tone —“ suppose *mischief* should be done?”

“ Suppose!—and *suppose*—it shouldn’t? You’ll never get your pistol done!—So, now!”

“ Now, how far?”

“ Oh, the usual distance. Step them out the baker’s dozen. Give them every chance, for God favours them.”

“ But they won’t see one another any more than the dead! ’Tis a complete farce—and the men themselves will grumble. How can they *mark*?”

“ Why, here’s a gate close by. I came past it. ’Tis white and large. Put them in a line with it.”

“ Why, Beauchamp will be hit, poor devil!”

“ Never mind—deserves it, d—— fool!”

The distance duly stepped out, each stationed his man.

“ I shall not stand against this gate, Streighton,” said Beauchamp, calmly. The Baronet laughed, and replied, “ Oh, you’re right, my dear fellow. We’ll put you, then, about three or four yards from it on one side.” They were soon stationed, and pistols put into their hands. Both exclaimed loudly that they could not see their man. “ So much the better. A chance shot!—We sha’n’t put you any nearer,” said Sir Edward—and the principals suddenly acquiesced.

"Now, take care to shoot at one another, not at *us*, in this cursed fog," said Sir Edward, so as to be heard by both. "We shall move off about twenty yards away to the right here. I will say—one! two! three!—and then, do as you like."

"The Lord have mercy on you!" added Hillier.

"Come, quick! quick!—'Tis cursedly cold, and I must be at ——'s by ten," cried Apsley, petulantly. The two seconds and the surgeon moved off. Beauchamp could not catch even a glimpse of his antagonist—to whom he was equally invisible. "Well," thought they "if we miss, we can fire again!" In a few moments, Sir Edward's voice called out loudly — "One! — two! — THREE!"

Both pistol-fires flashed through the fog at once, and the seconds rushed up to their men.

"Beauchamp, where are you!" "Apsley, where are you?"

"Here!" replied Beauchamp; but there was no answer from Apsley. He had been shot through the head; and, in groping about, terror-struck, in search of him, they stumbled over his corpse. The surgeon was in an instant, on his knees beside him, with his instruments out—but in vain. It was all over with Apsley. That heartless villain was gone to his account. Beauchamp's bullet, chance-shot as it was, had entered the right temple, passed through the brain, and lodged in the opposite temple. The only blood about him was a little which had trickled from the wound, down the cheek, on the shirt-collar.

"*Is he killed?*" groaned Beauchamp, bending over the body, and staring at it affrightedly; but before he

could receive an answer from Sir Edward or Hillier, who, almost petrified, grasped each a hand of the dead body—he had swooned. The first words he heard, on recovering his senses, were—“Fly! fly! fly!” Not comprehending their import, he languidly opened his eyes, and saw people, some standing round him, and others bearing away the dead body. Again he relapsed into unconsciousness, from which he was aroused by some one grasping him rather roughly by the shoulder. His eyes glanced on the head of a constable’s staff, and he heard the words—“You’re in my custody, sir.”

He started, and stared in the officer’s face.

“There’s a coach awaiting for you, sir, by the roadside, to take you to —— Office.” Beauchamp offered no resistance. He whispered merely—“Does my mother know?”

How he rode, or with whom, he knew not; but he found himself, about nine o’clock, alighting at the door of the police-office, more dead than alive.

While Beauchamp had lain insensible on the ground, the fog had completely vanished; and Sir Edward and Hillier, finding it dangerous to remain, as passengers from the roadside could distinctly see the gloomy group, made off, leaving Beauchamp and the surgeon with the corpse of Apsley. Sir Edward flew to his own house, accompanied by Hillier. The latter hastily wrote a note to Apsley’s brother, informing him of the event; and Sir Edward despatched his own valet, confidentially, to the valet of Beauchamp, communicating to him the dreadful situation of his master, and telling him to break it as he could to his friends. The valet instantly set off for the field of death, not however without apprizing,

by his terrified movements, his fellow-servants, that something dreadful had happened. He found a few people still standing on the fatal spot, from whom he learned that his master had been conveyed, a few minutes before, to the — Street Office—whither he repaired as fast as a hackney-coach could carry him. When he arrived an officer was endeavouring to rouse Mr Beauchamp from his stupor, by forcing on him a little brandy and water, in which he partly succeeded. Pale and breathless, the valet rushed through the crowd of officers and people about the door, and flung himself at his master's feet, wringing his hands, and crying—"Oh, master!—dear master!—what have you done! You'll kill your mother!" Even the myrmidons of justice seemed affected at the poor fellow's anguish; but his unhappy master only stared at him vacantly, without speaking. When he was conducted into the presence of the magistrate, he was obliged to be supported with a chair; for he was overcome, not only by the horrible situation to which he had brought himself, but his spirits and health were completely broken down, as well by his recent illness, as the wasting anxieties and agonies he had endured for months past. The brother of Apsley was present, raving like a madman; and he pressed the case vehemently against the prisoner. Bail, to a very great amount, was offered, but refused; and Beauchamp was eventually committed to Newgate, to take his trial, at the next Old Bailey Sessions. Sir Edward Streighton and Hillier surrendered in the course of the day, but were liberated on their own heavy recognisances, and two sureties, each in a thousand pounds, to appear and take their trial at the Old Bailey.

But what tongue can tell, what pen describe, the maddening horrors—the despair—of the mother and the betrothed bride? Not *mine*. Their sorrows shall be sacred for me.

—————For not to me belongs
To sound the mighty sorrows of thy breast,
But rather far off stand, with head and hands
Hung down, in fearful sympathy. Thy Ark of grief
Let me not touch, presumptuous.

To keep up, however, in some degree, the *continuity* of this melancholy narrative, I shall state merely, that I—who was called in to both mother and niece a few minutes after the news had smitten them, like the stroke of lightning, to the earth—wondered, was even confounded to find either of them survive it, or retain a glimpse of reason. The conduct of Ellen Beauchamp ennobled her, in my estimation, into something above humanity. She succeeded, at length, in overmastering her anguish and agitation, in order that she might minister to her afflicted aunt, in whose sorrow all consciousness or appreciation of her own seemed to have merged. For a whole week, Mrs Beauchamp hovered, so to speak, about the open door of death, held back apparently, only by a sweet spirit of sympathy and consolation—her niece! The first words she distinctly articulated, after many hours spent in delirious muttering, were—“ I will see my son!—I will see my son!” It was not judged safe to trust her alone, without medical assistance, for at least a fortnight. Poor Pritchard, for several nights, slept outside her bedroom door!

The first twenty-four hours of Beauchamp’s incarceration in Newgate were horrible. He who, on such

slight temptation, had beggared himself, and squandered away in infamy the fortunes of his fathers—who had broken the hearts of his idolizing mother—his betrothed wife—who had MURDERED A MAN—was now ALONE!—alone in the sullen gloom of a prison!

The transaction above detailed made much noise in London; and, disguised as it here is, in respect of names, dates, and places, there must be many who will recollect the *true facts*. There is ONE whose heart these pages will wither while he is reading!

Most of the journals, influenced by the vindictive misrepresentations of Apsley's brother, gave a most distorted version of the affair, and, presumptuously anticipating the decrees of justice, threw a gloomy hue over the prospects of the prisoner. He would certainly be convicted of *murder*, they said, executed, and dissected! The Judges were, or ought to be, resolved to put down duelling, and "never was there a more fitting opportunity for making a solemn example," &c., &c., &c. One of the papers gave dark hints, that, on the day of trial, some extraordinary and inculcating disclosures would be made concerning the events which led to the duel.

Mrs Beauchamp made three attempts, during the third week of her son's imprisonment, to visit him, but, on each instance, fainted on being lifted into the carriage; and, at length, desisted, on my representing the danger which accompanied her attempts. Her niece also seemed more dead than alive when she attended her aunt. Pritchard, however—the faithful, attached Pritchard—often went to and fro between Newgate and the house where Mrs Beauchamp lodged, two or three times a-day,

so that they were thus enabled to keep up a constant but sorrowful correspondence. Several members of the family had hurried up to London the instant they received intelligence of the disastrous circumstances above detailed; and it was well they did. Had it not been for their affectionate interference the most lamentable consequences might have been anticipated to mother, niece, and son. I also, at Mrs Beauchamp's pressing instance, called several times on her son, and found him, on each visit, sinking into deeper and deeper despondency; yet he seemed hardly sensible of the wretched reality and extent of his misery. Many a time when I entered his room—which was the most comfortable the governor could supply him—I found him seated at the table, with his head buried in his arms; and I was sometimes obliged to shake him, in order that I might arouse him from his lethargy. Even then, he could seldom be drawn into conversation. When he spoke of his mother and cousin, it was with an apathy which affected me more than the most passionate lamentations.

I brought him one day a couple of white winter roses from his mother and Ellen, telling him they were sent as pledges of love and hope. He snatched them out of my hands, kissed them, and buried them in his bosom, saying, "Lie you *there*, emblems of innocence, and blanch this black heart of mine, if you can!" I shall never forget the expression, nor the stern and gloomy manner in which this was uttered. I sat silent for some minutes.

"Doctor, doctor," said he hastily, placing his hands on his breast, "they are—I feel they are—thawing my frozen feelings!—they are softening my hard heart! O God! merciful God! I am becoming *human* again!" He

looked at me with an eagerness and vivacity to which he had long been a stranger. He extended to me both his hands; I clasped them heartily, and he burst into tears. He wept loud and long.

“The light of eternal truth breaks in upon me! Oh, my God! hast thou, then, not forgotten me?” He fell down on his knees, and continued, “Why, what a wretch—what a monster have I been!” He started to his feet. “Ah, ha? I’ve been in the lion’s den, and am plucked out of it!” I saw that his heart was overburdened, and his head not yet cleared. I said, therefore, little, and let him go on by fits and starts.

“Why, I’ve been all along in a dream! Henry Beauchamp!—in Newgate!—on a charge of *murder*!—Frightful!” He shuddered. “And my mother—my blessed mother!—where—how is she! Her heart bleeds—but no—no—no, it is not broken!—and *Ellen*—Ellen—Ellen!” After several short choking sobs, he burst again into a torrent of tears. I strove to soothe him; but “he would not be comforted.” “Doctor, say nothing to console me!—Don’t, don’t, or I shall go mad! Let me *feel* all my guilt; let it crush me!”

My time being expired, I rose and bade him adieu. He was in a musing mood, as if he were striving, with painful effort, to propose some subject to his thoughts—to keep some object before his mind—but could not. I promised to call again, between then and the day of his trial, which was but a week off.

The excruciating anxiety endured by these unhappy ladies, Mrs Beauchamp and her niece, as the day of trial approached—when the life or death of one in whom both their souls were bound up, must be decided on—defies

description. I never saw it equalled. To look on the settled pallor—the hollow, haggard features—the quivering limbs of Mrs Beauchamp—was heart-breaking. She seemed like one in the palsy. All the soothing as well as strengthening medicines, which all my experience could suggest, were rendered unavailing to *such* a “mind diseased,” to “raze” *such* “a written sorrow from the brain.” Ellen, too, was wasting by her side to a mere shadow. She had written letter after letter to her cousin, and the only answer she received was—

“Cousin Ellen ! How can you—how *dare* you—write to such a wretch as—Henry Beauchamp ?”

These two lines almost broke the poor girl's heart. What was to become of her ? Had she clung to her cousin through guilt and through blood, and did he now refuse to love her, or receive her proffered sympathy ? She never wrote again to him till her aunt implored, nay, commanded her to write, for the purpose of inducing him to see them if they called. He refused. He was inflexible. Expostulation was useless. He turned out poor Pritchard, who had undertaken to plead their cause, with violence from his room. Whether he dreaded the effects of such an interview on the shattered nerves, the weakened frame of his mother and cousin, or feared that his own fortitude would be overpowered—or debarred himself of their sweet but sorrowful society, by way of *penance*, I know not ; but he returned an unwavering denial to every such application. I think the last mentioned was the motive which actuated him ; for I said to him, on one occasion, “ Well, but Beauchamp, suppose your mother should *die* before you have seen her, and received her forgiveness ?” He replied,

sternly, "Well, I shall have *deserved* it." I could thus account for his feelings, without referring them to sullenness or obstinacy. His heart bled at every pore under the unceasing lashings of remorse! On another occasion, he said to me, "It would *kill* my mother to see me here. She shall never die in a prison!"

The day previous to his trial I called upon him, pursuant to my promise. The room was full of counsel and attorneys; and numerous papers were lying on the table, which a clerk was beginning to gather up into a bag when I entered. They had been holding their final consultation; and left their client more disturbed than I had seen him for some days. The eminent counsel who had been retained, spoke by no means encouragingly of the expected issue of the trial, and reiterated the determination to "do the very uttermost on his behalf." They repeated, also, that the prosecutor was following him up like a blood-hound; that he had got scent of some evidence against Beauchamp, in particular, which would *tell* terribly against him—and make out a case of "malice prepense."—And, as if matters had not been already sufficiently gloomy, the attorney had learned, only that afternoon, that the case was to be tried by one of the judges who, it was rumoured, was resolved to make an example of the first duellist he could convict!

"I shall, undoubtedly, be sacrificed, as my *fortune* has been already," said Beauchamp, with a little trepidation. "Every thing seems against me. If I *should* be condemned to death—what is to become of my mother and Ellen?"

"I feel assured of your acquittal, Mr Beauchamp," said I, not knowing exactly *why*, if he had asked me.

"I am a little given to superstition, Doctor," he

replied—"and I feel a persuasion—an innate conviction—that the grand finishing stroke has yet to descend—my misery awaits its climax."

"Why, what can you mean, my dear sir?—Nothing new has been elicited."

"Doctor," he replied, gloomily—"I'll tell you something. I feel I OUGHT to die!"

"Why, Mr Beauchamp?" I asked, with surprise.

"Ought not he to die who is *at heart* a murderer?" he enquired.

"Assuredly."

"Then I am such an one. I MEANT to kill Apsley. I prayed to God that I might. I would have shot breast to breast, but I would have killed him, and rid the earth of such a ruffian," said Beauchamp, rising with much excitement from his chair, and walking hurriedly to and fro. I shuddered to hear him make such an avowal, and continued silent. I felt my colour changed.

"Are you shocked, Doctor?" he enquired, pausing abruptly, and looking me full in the face. "I repeat it," clenching his fist—"I would have perished eternally, to gratify my revenge. So would you," he continued, "if you had suffered as I have." With the last words he elevated his voice to a high key, and his eye glanced on me like lightning, as he passed and repassed me.

"How can we expect the mercy we will not show?" I enquired, mildly.

"Don't mistake me, Doctor," he resumed, without answering my last question—"It is not death I dread, disturbed as I appear, but only the *mode* of it. Death I covet, as a relief from life, which has grown hateful; but, great Heaven, to be HUNG like a dog!"

"Think of hereafter!" I exclaimed.

“Pshaw! I’m past thoughts of that. Why did not God keep me from the snares into which I have fallen?”

At that moment, came a letter from Sir Edward Streighton. When he recognised the superscription, he threw it down on the table, exclaiming—“There! this is the first time I have heard from this accomplished scoundrel, since the day I killed Apsley.” He opened it, a scowl of fury and contempt on his brow, and read the following flippant and unfeeling letter:—

“Dear Brother in the bonds of blood!

“My right trusty and well beloved counsellor, and thine—Hillier, and thy unworthy E. S., intend duly to take our stand beside thee, at nine o’clock to-morrow morning, in the dock of the Old Bailey, as per recognisances. Be not thou cast down, O my soul; but throw thou fear unto the dogs! There’s never a jury in England will convict us, even though, as I hear, that bloody-minded old —— is to try us! We’ve got a good fellow (on reasonable terms, considering) to swear he happened to be present, and that we put you up at forty paces! and that he heard you tender an apology to Apsley! The sweet convenient rogue!!! What think you of that, dear Beau? Yours ever—but not on the gallows—

“EDW. STREIGHTON.

“P.S.—I wish Apsley, by the way, poor devil! had paid me a trifling hundred or two he owed me, before going home. But he went in a hurry, ’tis true. Catch me ever putting up another man before asking him if he has any debts unprovided for!”

“There, there, Doctor!” exclaimed Beauchamp, flinging the letter on the floor, and stamping on it—“ought

not I to go out of the world, for allowing such a fellow as this to lead me the dance of ruin?"

I shook my head.

"Oh, did you but know the secret history of the last six months," he continued, bitterly—"the surpassing folly—the black ingratitude—the villainies of all kinds with which it was stained—you would blush to sit in the same room with me! Would it not be so?"

"Come, come, Mr Beauchamp, you are raving!" I replied, giving him my hand, while the tears half blinded me; for he looked the picture of contrition and hopelessness.

"Well, then," he continued, eyeing me steadfastly, "I may do what I have often thought of. You have a kind considerate heart, and I will trust you. By way of the heaviest penance I could think of—but, alas, how unavailing!—I have employed the last week in writing my short, but wretched history. Read it—and curse, as you go on, my folly, my madness, my villainy! I've often laid down my pen, and wept aloud, while writing it; and yet the confession has eased my heart. One thing, I think, you will see plainly—that, all along, I have been the victim of some deep diabolical conspiracy. Those two vile fellows who will stand beside me to-morrow in the dock, like evil spirits—and the monster I have killed—have been the main agents throughout. I'm sure something will, ere long, come to light, and show you I am speaking the truth. Return it me," he continued, taking a packet from his table-drawer, sealed with black, "in the event of my acquittal, that I may burn it; but, if I am to die, do what you will with it. Even if the world know of it, it cannot hurt me in the

grave, and it may save some from *Hazard* and *Rouge et Noir* ! Horrible sounds !”

I received the packet in silence, promising him to act as he wished.

“ How will my mother—how will Ellen—get over to-morrow ! Heaven have them in its holy keeping ! My own heart quails at to-morrow !—I must breathe a polluted atmosphere ; I must stand on the precise spot which has been occupied by none but the vilest of my species ; I shall have every eye in court fixed upon me—some with horror, others detestation—and some *pity*—which is worse than either. I must stand between two whom I can never look on as other than devils incarnate ! My every gesture and motion—every turn of my face—will be noted down and published all over the kingdom, with severe, possibly insulting comments. Good God !—how am I to bear it all ?” * * *

“ Have you prepared your defence, Mr Beauchamp ?” I enquired. He pointed languidly to several sheets of foolscap, full of scorings out, and said, with a sigh, “ I’m afraid it is labour lost. I can say little or nothing. I shall not *lie*, even for my life ! I have yet to finish it.”

“ Don’t, then, let me keep you from it ! May God bless you, my dear sir, and send you an acquittal to-morrow !—What shall I say to your mother—to Miss Beauchamp, if I see them to-night ?”

His eyes glistened with tears—he trembled—shook his head, and whispered, “ What CAN be said to them ?”

I shook him fervently by the hand. As I was quitting the door, he beckoned me back.

“ Doctor,” he whispered, in a shuddering tone, “ there is to be an *execution* to-morrow ! Five men will be

hanged within ten yards of me ! I shall hear them, in the night, putting up the—gallows !”

The memorable morning—for such it was, even to me—at length dawned. The whole day was rainy, cold, and foggy, as if the elements, had combined to depress hearts already prostrate ! After swallowing a hasty breakfast, I set off for the Old Bailey, calling, for a few minutes, on Mrs Beauchamp, as I had promised her. Poor old lady ! She had not slept half an hour during the whole night ; and when I entered the room, she was lying in bed, with her hands clasped together, and her eyes closed, listening to one of the church prayers, which her niece was reading her. I sat down in silence ; and when the low tremulous voice of Miss Beauchamp had ceased, I shook her cold hand, and took my seat by her aunt. I pushed the curtain aside that I might see her distinctly. Her features looked ghastly. What savage work grief had wrought there !

“ I don’t think I shall live through this dreadful day,” said she ; “ I feel every thing dissolving within me !—I am deadly sick every moment ; my heart flutters as if it were in expiring agonies ; and my limbs have little in them more than a corpse !—Ellen, too, my sweet love ! *she* is as bad ; and yet she conquers it, and attends me like an angel !”

“ Be of good heart, my dear madam,” said I ; “ matters are by no means desperate. This evening—I’ll stake my life for it—you shall have your son in your arms !”

“ Ha !” quivered the old lady, clapping her hands, while a faint hysteric laugh broke from her colourless lips.

“ Well, I must leave you—for I am going to hear the opening of the trial ; I promised your son as much last night.”

“ How was he ?” faintly enquired Miss Beauchamp, who was sitting beside the fire, her face buried in her hands, and her elbows resting on her knees. The anguished eyes of her aunt also asked me the question, though her lips spoke not. I assured them that he was not in worse spirits than I had seen him, and that I left him preparing his defence.

“ The Lord God of his fathers bless him, and deliver him !” moaned Mrs Beauchamp. As, however, time passed, and I wished to look in on one or two patients in my way, I began to think of leaving, though I scarcely knew how. I enjoined them to keep constantly by Mrs Beauchamp a glass of brandy and water, with half a tea-spoonful of laudanum in it, that she or her niece might drink of it whenever they felt a sudden faintness come over them. For farther security, I had also stationed, for the day, in her bedroom, a young medical friend, who might pay her constant attention. Arrangements had been made, I found, with the attorney, to report the progress of the trial every hour by four regular runners.

Shaking both the ladies affectionately by the hand, I set off. After seeing the patients I spoke of, I hurried on to the Old Bailey. It was striking ten by St Sepulchre’s clock when I reached that gloomy street. The rain was pouring down in drenching showers. I passed by the gallows, which they were taking down, and on which five men had been executed only two hours before. Horrid sight ! The whole of the street along the sessions’ house was covered with straw, thoroughly soaked

with wet ; and my carriage-wheels rolled along it noiselessly. I felt my colour leaving me, and my heart beating fast, as I descended, and entered the area before the court-house, which was occupied with many anxious groups, conversing together, heedless of the rain, and endeavouring to get admittance into the court. The street entrance was crowded ; and it was such a silent, gloomy crowd, as I never before saw ! I found the trial had commenced—so I made my way instantly to the counsel's benches. The court was crowded to suffocation ; and, among the spectators, I recognised several of the nobility. Three prisoners stood in the dock—all of gentlemanly appearance ; and the strong startling light thrown on them from the mirror over-head, gave their anxious faces a ghastly hue. How vividly is that group, even at this distance of time, before my eyes ! On the right hand side, stood Sir Edward Streighton—dressed in military style, with a black stock, and his blue frock-coat, with velvet collar, buttoned up close to his neck. Both his hands rested on his walking-stick ; and his head, bent a little aside, was attentively directed towards the counsel for the crown, who was stating the case to the jury. Hillier leaned against the left hand side of the dock, his arms folded over his breast, and his stern features, clouded with anxiety, but evincing no agitation, were gathered into a frown, as he listened to the strong terms in which his conduct was being described by the counsel. Between these stood poor Beauchamp, with fixed and most sorrowful countenance. He was dressed in black, with a full black stock, in the centre of which glistened a dazzling speck of diamond. Both his hands leaned upon the dock, on which stood a glass of spring

water; and his face was turned full towards the judge. There was an air of melancholy composure and resignation about his wasted features; and he looked dreadfully thin and fallen away. His appearance evidently excited deep and respectful sympathy. How my heart ached to look at him, when my thoughts reverted for an instant to his mother and cousin! There was, however, one other object of the gloomy picture which arrested my attention, and has remained with me ever since. Just beneath the witness-box, there was a savage face fixed upon the counsel, gloating upon his exaggerated violence of tone and manner. It was Mr Frederick Apsley, the relentless prosecutor. I never saw such an impersonation of malignity. On his knees lay his fists, clenched, and quivering with irrepressible fury; and the glances he occasionally cast towards the prisoners were absolutely fiendish.

The counsel for the prosecution distorted and aggravated every occurrence on the fatal night of the quarrel, Hillier and Streighton, as he went on, exchanged confounded looks, and muttered between their teeth; but Beauchamp seemed unmoved—even when the counsel seriously asserted he should be in a condition to prove, that Beauchamp came to the house of the deceased with the avowed intention of provoking him into a duel; that he had been attempting foul play throughout the evening; and that the cause of his inveteracy against the deceased, was the deceased's having won considerably.

“Did this quarrel originate, then, in a gaming-house?” enquired the judge, sternly.

“Why—yes, my Lord—it did, undoubtedly.”

“ Pray, are the parties *professed* gamblers ?”

The counsel hesitated. “ I do not exactly know what your Lordship means by *professed* gamblers, my Lord ?”

“ Oh !” exclaimed the judge, significantly, “ go on—go on, sir.” I felt shocked at the virulence manifested by the counsel ; and I could not help suspecting him of uttering the grossest falsehoods, when I saw all three of the prisoners involuntarily turn towards one another, and lift up their hands with amazement. As his address seemed likely to continue much longer, profound as was the interest I felt in the proceedings, I was compelled to leave. I stood up for that purpose, and to take a last look at Beauchamp—when his eye suddenly fell upon me. He started—his lips moved—he looked at me anxiously—gave me a hurried bow, and resumed the attentive attitude in which he had been standing.

I hurried away to see my patients, several of whom were in most critical circumstances. Having gone through most on my list, and being in the neighbourhood, I stepped in to see how Mrs Beauchamp was going on. When I entered her bedroom, after gently tapping at the door, I heard a hurried feeble voice exclaim—“ There ! there ! who is that ?” It was Mrs Beauchamp, who endeavoured, but in vain, to raise herself up in bed, while her eyes stared at me with an expression of wild alarm, which abated a little, on seeing who I was. She had mistaken me, I found, for the hourly messenger. I sat down beside her. Several of her female relatives were in the room—a pallid group—having arrived soon after I had left.

“ Well, my dear madam, and how are you now ?” I enquired, taking the aged sufferer’s hand in mine.

“ I may be better, Doctor—but cannot be worse. Nature tells me, the hour is come !”

“ I am happy to see you so well—so affectionately attended in these trying circumstances,” said I, looking around the room. She made me no reply—but moaned —“ Oh ! Henry, Henry, Henry !—I would to God you had never been born !—Why are you thus breaking the heart that always loved you so fondly !” She shook her head, and the tears trembled through her closed eyelids. Miss Beauchamp, dressed in black, sat at the foot of the bed, speechless, her head leaning against the bed-post, and her pale face directed towards her aunt.

“ How are *you*, my dear Miss Beauchamp ?” enquired I. She made me no answer, but continued looking at her aunt.

“ My sweet love !” said her mother, drawing her chair to her, and proffering her a little wine and water. “ Doctor —— is speaking to you. He asks you how you are ?” Miss Beauchamp looked at me, and pressed her white hand upon her heart, without speaking. Her mother looked at me, significantly, as if she begged I would not ask her daughter any more questions, for it was evident she could not bear them. I saw several slips of paper lying on a vacant chair beside the bed. They were the hourly billets from the Old Bailey. One of them was —“ 12 o'clock, O. B. Not quite so encouraging. Our counsel can't make much impression in cross-examination. Judge seems rather turning against prisoner.”

“ 1 o'clock, O. B. Nothing particular since last note. Prisoner very calm and firm.”

“ 2 o'clock, O. B. Still going on as in last.”

“ 3 o'clock, O. B. Mr Beauchamp just read his

defence. Made favourable impression on the court. Many in tears. Acknowledged himself ruined by play. General impression, prisoner victim of conspiracy."

Such were the hourly annunciations of the progress of the trial, forwarded by the attorney, in whose handwriting each of them was. The palsyng suspense in which the intervals between the receipt of each was passed, and the trepidation with which they were opened and read—no one daring scarcely to touch them but Mr M—the medical attendant—cannot be described. Mr M—informed me that Mrs Beauchamp had been wandering deliriously, more or less, all day, and that the slightest noise in the street, like hurrying footsteps, spread dismay through the room, and nearly drove the two principal sufferers frantic. Miss Beauchamp, I found, had been twice in terrible hysterics, but, with marvellous self-possession, calmly left the room when she felt them coming on, and retired to the farthest part of the house. While Mr M—and I were conversing in a low whisper near the fire-place, a heavy, but muffled knock at the street door, announced the arrival of another express from the Old Bailey. Mrs Beauchamp trembled violently, and the very bed quivered under her, as she saw the billet delivered into my hands. I opened it, and read aloud—

"4 o'clock, O. B. Judge summing up—sorry to say, a little unfavourably to prisoner. Don't *think*, however, prisoner will be *capitally* convicted." Within this slip, was another, which was from Beauchamp himself, and addressed—

"Sweet loves!—Courage! The crisis approaches. I am not in despair. God is merciful! May he bless you for ever and ever, my mother, my Ellen!—H. B."

The gloomy tenor of the last billet—for we could not conceal them from either, as they insisted on *seeing* them after we had read them—excited Mrs and Miss Beauchamp almost to frenzy. It was heart-rending to see them both shaking in every muscle, and uttering the most piteous moans. I resolved not to quit them till the event was known one way or another, and dismissed Mr M——, begging him to return home with the carriage, and inform my wife that I should not dine at home. I then begged that some refreshment might be brought in, ostensibly for my dinner, but really to give me an opportunity of forcing a little nourishment on my wretched patients. My meal, however, was scanty and solitary ; for I could scarcely eat myself, and could not induce any one else to touch food.

“ This must be a day of *fasting* !” sighed Mrs Beauchamp ; and I desisted from the attempt.

“ Mrs Beauchamp,” enquired her sister-in-law, “ would you like to hear a chapter in the Bible read to you ?”

“ Y—ye—yes !” she replied, eagerly ; “ Let it be the parable of the *prodigal son* ; and perhaps Dr —— will read it to us ?”

What an affecting selection !—Thinking it might serve to occupy their minds for a short time, I commenced reading it, but not very steadily or firmly. The relieving tears gushed forth freely from Mrs Beauchamp, and every one in the room, as I went on with that most touching, beautiful, and appropriate parable. When I had concluded, and amidst a pause of silent expectation, another billet was brought :—

“ 5 o'clock, O. B. Judge still summing up with great pains. Symptoms of leaning towards the prisoner.”

Another agitating hour elapsed—how, I scarcely know; and a breathless messenger brought a sixth billet:—

“6 o'clock, *O. B.* Jury retired to consider verdict—been absent half an hour. Rumoured in court that two hold out against the rest—not known on which side.”

After the reading of this torturing note, which Mrs Beauchamp did not ask to see, she lifted up her shaking hands to Heaven, and seemed lost in an agony of prayer. After a few minutes spent in this way, she gasped, almost inaudibly—“Oh! Doctor, read once more the parable you have read, beginning at the twentieth verse.” I took the Bible in my hands, and tremulously read—

“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion”—(a short, bitter, hysteric laugh broke from Mrs Beauchamp)—“and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

* * * “And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it: and let us eat and be merry;

“For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found: and they began”——

The death-like silence in which my trembling voice was listened to, was broken by the sound of a slight bustle in the street beneath, and the noise of some approaching vehicle. We scarcely breathed. The sound increased. Miss Beauchamp slowly dropped on her knees beside the bed, and buried her ashy face in the clothes. The noise outside increased; voices were heard; and at length a short faint “huzza!” was audible.

“There!—I told you so! He is free!—My son is **ACQUITTED!**” exclaimed Mrs Beauchamp, sitting in an instant upright in bed, stretching her arms upwards, and

clapping her hands in ecstasy. Her features were lit up with a glorious smile. She pushed back her dishevelled grey hair, and sat straining her eye and ear, and stretching forward her hands, as if to enjoin silence.

Then was heard the sound of footsteps rapidly ascending the stairs; the door was knocked at, and, before I could reach it, for the purpose of preventing any sudden surprise, in rushed the old steward, frantic with joy, waving his hat over his head.

“NOT GUILTY! NOT GUILTY!—NOT GUILTY, my lady!” he gasped, all in a breath, in defiance of my cautionary movements. “He’s coming! He’s coming! He’s coming, my lady!” Miss Beauchamp sank in an instant on the floor, with a faint scream, and was carried out of the room in a swoon.

Mrs Beauchamp again clapped her hands. Her son rushed into the room, flung himself at her feet, and threw his arms around her. For several moments, he locked her in his embraces, kissing her with convulsive fondness. “My mother! My own mother!—Your son!” he gasped; but she heard him not. She had expired in his arms.

To proceed with my narrative, after recounting such a lamentable catastrophe, is like conducting a spectator to the death-strewn plain, after the day of battle! All, in the once happy family of Beauchamp, was thenceforth sorrow, sickness, broken-heartedness, and death. As for the unhappy Beauchamp, he was released from the horrors of a prison, only to “turn his pale face to the

wall," on a lingering, languishing, bed of sickness, which he could not quit, even to follow the poor remains of his mother to their final resting-place in —— shire. He was not only confined to his bed, but wholly unconscious of the time of the burial, for a fierce nervous fever kept him in a state of continual delirium. Another physician and myself were in constant attendance on him. Poor Miss Beauchamp also was ill, and, if possible, in a worse plight than her cousin. The reader cannot be surprised that such long and intense sufferings should have shattered her vital energies—should have sown the seeds of *consumption* in her constitution. Her pale, emaciated, shadowy figure, is now before me!—After continuing under my care for several weeks, her mother carried her home into —— shire, in a most precarious state, hoping the usual beneficial results expected from a return to native air. Poor girl! she gave me a little pearl ring, as a keepsake, the day she left; and intrusted to me a rich diamond ring, to give to her cousin Henry. "It is too large now, for *my* fingers," said she, with a sigh, as she dropped it into my hand, from her wasted finger! "Tell him," said she, "as soon as you consider it safe, that my love is his—my whole heart! And though we may never meet on this side the grave, let him wear it to *think* of me, and hope for happiness hereafter!" These were among the last words that sweet young woman ever spoke to me.

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As the reader, possibly, may think he has been long enough detained among these sorrowful scenes, I shall draw them now to a close, and omit much of what I had set down for publication.

Mr Beauchamp did not once rise from his bed during two months, the greater part of which time was passed in a state of stupor. At other periods, he was delirious, and raved dreadfully about scenes with which the manuscript he committed to me in prison had made me long and painfully familiar. He loaded himself with the heaviest curses, for the misery he had occasioned to his mother and Ellen. He had taken it into his head that the latter was also dead, and that he had attended her funeral. He was not convinced to the contrary, till I judged it safe to allow him to open a letter she had addressed to him, under cover to me. She told him she thought she was "getting strong again;" and that, if he would still accept her heart and hand, in the event of his recovery, they were his unchangeably. Nothing contributed so much to Beauchamp's recovery as this letter. With what fond transports did he receive the ring Ellen had intrusted to my keeping!

His old steward, Pritchard, after accompanying his venerated lady's remains into the country, returned immediately to town, and scarcely ever after left his master's bedside. His officious affection rendered the office of the valet a comparative sinecure. Many were the piques and heart-burnings between these two zealous and emulous servants of an unfortunate master, on account of the one usurping the other's duty!

One of the earliest services that old Pritchard rendered his master, as soon as I warranted him in so doing, was to point out who had been the "serpent in his path"—the origin—the deliberate, diabolical designer of his ruin—in the person of his tutor. The shock of this discovery rendered Beauchamp speechless for the remainder

of the day. Strange and wise are the ways of Providence! How does the reader imagine the disgraceful disclosures were brought about? Sir Edward Streighton, who had got into his hands the title-deeds of one of the estates, out of which he and his scoundrel companions had swindled Beauchamp, had been hardy enough—*quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*—to venture into a court of law, to prosecute his claim¹ In spite of threatened disclosures, he pressed on to trial; when such a series of flagrant iniquities was developed, unexpectedly to *all* parties, as compelled Sir Edward, who was in court *incognito*, to slip away, and without even venturing home, embark for the Continent, and from thence to that common-sewer of England—America.* His papers were all seized, under a judge's order, by Mr Beauchamp's agents; and among them was found the letter addressed to him by Eccles, coolly commending his unsuspecting pupil to destruction!

Under Beauchamp's order, his steward made a copy of the letter, and enclosed it, with the following lines, to the tutor, who had since contrived to gain a vicarage!

“ To the Reverend Peter Eccles, vicar of ——.

SIR,—A letter, of which the following is a copy, has been discovered, in your handwriting, among the papers of Sir Edward Streighton; and the same post which brings you this, encloses your own original letter to Sir

* His companion in villany, who, in this narrative, is called *Hil-lier*, brazened out the affair with unequalled effrontery, and continued in England till within the last very few years; when, rank with roguery, he tumbled into the grave, and so cheated justice. The hoary villain might be seen nightly at —— Street, with huge green glasses—*now* up to his knees in cards—and *then* endeavouring, with palsied hand, to shake the dice with which he had ruined so many.

Edward, with all necessary explanations, to the bishop of your diocese.

“ The monstrous perfidy it discloses will be forthwith made as public as the journals of the day can make it.

“ THOMAS PRITCHARD,
Agent for Mr Beauchamp.”

What results attended the application to the bishop, and whether or not the concluding threat was carried into effect, *I have reasons for concealing*. There are, who do not need information on those points.

The first time that I saw Mr Beauchamp down stairs, after his long, painful, and dangerous illness, was on an evening in the July following. He was sitting in his easy-chair, which was drawn close to a bow-window, commanding an uninterrupted view of the setting sun. It was piteous to see how loosely his black clothes hung about him. If you touched any of his limbs, they felt like those of a skeleton clothed with the vestments of the living. His long thin fingers seemed attenuated and blanched to a more than feminine delicacy of size and hue. His face was shrunk and sallow, and his forehead bore the searings of a “ scorching wo.” His hair, naturally black as jet, was now of a sad iron-grey colour; and his eyes were sunk, but full of vivid, though melancholy expression. The air of noble frankness, spirit, and cheerfulness, which had heretofore graced his countenance, was fled for ever. In short, to use the quaint expression of a sterling old English writer, “ care had scratched out the comeliness of his visage.” He appeared to have lost all interest in life, even though Ellen was alive, and they were engaged to be married within a few months! In his right hand was a copy of *Bacon's*

Essays ; and, on the little finger of his left, I observed the rich ring given him by his cousin. As he sat, I thought him a fit subject for a painter ! Old Pritchard, dressed also in plain mourning, sat at a table busily engaged with account books and piles of papers, and seemed to be consulting his master on the affairs of his estate, when I entered.

“ I hope, Doctor, you’ll excuse Mr Pritchard continuing in the room with us. He’s in the midst of important business,” he continued, seeing the old man preparing to leave the room ; “ he is my *friend* now, as well as steward ; and the oldest, I may say *only* friend, I have left !” I entreated him not to mention the subject, and the faithful old steward bowed, and resumed his seat.

“ Well,” said Mr Beauchamp, after answering the usual enquiries respecting his health, “ I am not, after all, absolutely *ruined* in point of fortune. Pritchard has just been telling me that I have more than four hundred a-year left”——

“ Sir, sir, you may as well call it a good £500 a-year,” said Pritchard, eagerly, taking off his spectacles. “ I am but £20 a-year short of the mark, and I’ll *manage that*, by hook or by crook, and you—see if I don’t !” Beauchamp smiled faintly. “ You see, Doctor, Pritchard is determined to put the best face upon matters.”

“ Well, Mr Beauchamp,” I replied, “ taking it even at the lower sum mentioned, I am sincerely rejoiced to find you so comfortably provided for.” While I was speaking, the tears rose in his eyes—trembled there for a few moments—and then, spite of all attempts to prevent them, overflowed.

“ What distresses you ?” I enquired, taking his slen-

der fingers in mine. When he had a little recovered himself, he replied, with emotion, "Am I not comparatively a beggar? Does it suit to hear that Henry Beauchamp is a *beggar*? Alas! I have nothing now but misery—hopeless misery! Where shall I go, what shall I do, to find peace? Wherever I go, I shall carry a broken heart, and a consciousness that I have deserved it!—I—I, the murderer of two"——

"Two, Mr Beauchamp? What can you mean? The voice of justice has solemnly acquitted you of murdering the miserable Apsley—and who the *other* is"——

"My mother!—my poor, fond, doating mother! I have killed *her*, as certainly as I slew the guilty wretch that ruined me! My ingratitude pierced her *heart*, as my bullet his *head*! That it is which distracts—which maddens me! The rest I might have borne—even the anguish I have occasioned my sweet forgiving Ellen, and the profligate destruction of the fortunes of my house!" I saw he was in one of the frequent fits of despondency to which he was latterly subject, and thought it best not to interrupt the strain of his bitter retrospections. I therefore listened to his self-accusations in silence.

"Surely you have ground for comfort and consolation in the unalterable, the increasing attachment of your cousin?" said I, after a melancholy pause.

"Ah, my God! it is that which drives the nail deeper! I cannot, cannot bear it! How shall I *DARE* to wed her? To bring her to an impoverished house—the house of a *ruined gamester*—when she has a right to rule in the halls of my fathers? To hold out to her the arms of a *MURDERER*!" He ceased abruptly—trembled, clasped his hands together, and seemed lost in a painful reverie.

"God has, after all, intermingled some sweets in the cup of sorrows you have drained : why cast *them* scornfully away, and dwell on the state of the bitter?"

"Because my head is disordered ; my appetites are corrupted. I cannot now *taste* happiness. I know it not ; the relish is gone for ever!"

* * * * *

"In what part of the country do you propose residing?" I enquired.

"I can never be received in English society again—and I will not remain here in a perpetual pillory—to be pointed at !—I shall quit England for ever"——

"You *sha'n't*, though !" exclaimed the steward, bursting into tears, and rising from his chair, no longer able to control himself—"You sha'n't go," he continued, walking hurriedly to and fro, snapping his fingers. "You sha'n't—no, you sha'n't, Master Beauchamp—though I say it that shouldn't!—You shall trample on my old bones, first."

"Come, come, kind old man !—Give me your hand !" exclaimed Mr Beauchamp, affected by this lively show of feeling, on the part of his old and tried servant.—"Come, I won't go, then—I won't !"

"Ah !—point at you—*point at you* ! did you say, sir ? I'll be —— if I won't do for any one that points at you, what you did for that rogue Aps"——

"Hush, Pritchard !" said his master, rising from his chair, and looking shudderingly at him.

The sun was fast withdrawing, and a portion of its huge blood-red disk was already dipped beneath the horizon. Is there a more touching or awful object in nature ?—We who were gazing at it, felt that there was

not. All before us was calmness and repose. Beauchamp's kindling eye assured me that his soul sympathized with the scene.

"Doctor, Doctor," he exclaimed, suddenly, "What has come to me? Is there a devil mocking me? Or is it an angel whispering that I shall yet be happy? May I listen—*may* I listen to it?"—He paused. His excitement increased. "Oh! yes, yes! I feel intimately—I know I am reserved for happier days! God smileth on me, and my soul is once more warmed and enlightened!"—An air of joy diffused itself over his features. I never before saw the gulf between despair and hope passed with such lightning speed!—Was it returning delirium only?

"How can he enjoy happiness who has never tasted misery?" he continued, uninterrupted by me. "And may not he most relish peace, who has been longest tossed in trouble!—Why—why have I been desponding?—Sweet, precious Ellen! I will write to you! We shall soon meet; we shall even be happy together!—Pritchard," he exclaimed, turning abruptly to the listening steward—"what say you? Will you be my *major-domo*—eh? Will you be with us our managing man in the country, once again?"

"Ay, Master Beauchamp," replied Pritchard, crying like a child, "as long as these old eyes, and hands, and head, can serve you, they are yours! I'll be any thing you'd like to make me!"

"There's a bargain, then, between you and me!—You see, Doctor, Ellen will not cast me off; and old Pritchard will cling to me; why should I throw away happiness?"

“Certainly—certainly—there is much happiness before you”——

“The thought is transporting, that I shall soon leave the scenes of guilt and dissipation for ever, and breathe the fresh and balmy atmosphere of virtue once again! How I long for the time! Mother, will you watch over your prodigal son?” How little he thought of the affecting recollections he had called forth in my mind, by mentioning—*the prodigal son*!

I left him about nine o'clock, recommending him to retire to rest, and not expose himself to the cool of the evening. I felt excited, myself, by the tone of our conversation, which, I suspected, however, had, on his part, verged far into occasional flightiness. I had not such sanguine hopes for him, as he entertained for himself—I suspected that his constitution, however it might rally for a time, from its present prostration, had received a shock before which it *must* erewhile fall!

About five o'clock the next morning, I and all my family were alarmed by one of the most violent and continued ringings and thunderings at the door I ever heard. On looking out of my bedroom window, I saw Mr Beauchamp's valet below, wringing his hands, and stamping about the steps like one distracted.

Full of fearful apprehension, I dressed myself in an instant, and came down stairs.

“In the name of God, what is the matter?” I enquired, seeing the man pale as ashes.

“Oh, my master!—come—come”—he gasped, and could get out no more. We both ran at a top speed to Mr Beauchamp's lodgings. Even at that early hour, there was an agitated group before the door. I rushed

up stairs, and soon learnt all. About a quarter of an hour before, the family were disturbed by hearing Mr Beauchamp's Newfoundland dog, which always slept at his master's bedroom door, howling, whining, and scratching against it. The valet and some one else came to see what was the matter. They found the dog trembling violently, his eyes fixed on the floor; and, on looking down, they saw blood flowing from under the door. The valet, threw himself, half frantic, against the door, and burst it open; he rushed in, and saw all! Poor Beauchamp, with his razor grasped in his right hand, was lying on the floor lifeless!

I never now hear of a young man—especially of fortune—frequenting the GAMING-TABLE, but I think, with a sigh, of Henry Beauchamp.

I CANNOT resist the opportunity of appending to this narrative the following mournful testimony to its fidelity, which appeared in the *Morning Herald* newspaper of the 19th October, 1831:—

SIR,—There is an awful narrative in the current number of BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, of the fate of a gamester, which, in addition to the writer's assurances, bears intrinsic evidence of *truth*. Independent even of this, I can believe it all, highly coloured as some may consider it—for I am a *ruined gamester*!

Yes, Sir, I am here, lying, as it were, *rotting* in jail, because I have, like a fool, spent over the gaming-table all my patrimony! *Twenty-five thousand pounds* are all

gone at *Rouge et Noir* and Hazard ! All gone ! I could not help thinking that the writer of that terrible account had *me* in his eye, or has been told something of my history !

When I shall be released from my horrid prison I know not ; but even when I am, life will have lost all its relish, for I shall be a *beggar* !

If I had a hundred pounds to spare, I would spend it all in reprinting the “ Gambler ” from BLACKWOOD’S MAGAZINE, and distributing it among the frequenters of C——’s and F——’s, and other hells ! I am sure its overwhelming truth and power would shock *some* into pausing on the brink of ruin !

I address *you*, because your paper has been one of the most determined and successful enemies to gaming.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

A RUINED GAMESTER.

—— Prison, Oct. 17.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



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